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VOL. I.—Greek and Hindoo Thought; Græco-Roman Paganism; Judaism; and Christianity down to the Closing of the Schools of Athens by Justinian, 529 A.D.

By JOHN BEATTIE CROZIER

(Author of "Civilization and Progress").

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MY INNER LIFE.

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MY INNER LIFE

BEING A CHAPTER IN

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PERSONAL EVOLUTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY

JOHN BEATTIE CROZIER.

Author of

'History of Intellectual Development.'

'Civilization and Progress,' &c., &c.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.,
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
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TO

MY WIFE,

without whose loyal and untiring co-operation and encouragement continued through twenty-one years of a happy married life, my books could not have been written

I DEDICATE

THIS VOLUME.

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PREFACE.

IT would have been more appropriate and becoming, perhaps, had this Autobiography, if published at all, been deferred to a later period of my life, but a threatened failure of eyesight has left me no alternative. In the uncertainty as to my being able to continue the research necessary for the remaining volumes of my 'History of Intellectual Development,' I felt that the central chapters of this work in which I trace the evolution of Modern Thought down to the present day, would sufficiently represent my views of this portion of the subject to give some kind of unity to the whole, in case the larger work were not completed. I am not without hope however, that the progress of the disease may be so far arrested that I may still be able to complete my larger history in detail. In the meantime the present book will serve to draw together more tightly than would be possible in the larger work, views on the World-Problem and on Life which lie scattered through earlier volumes.

In the Chapter entitled 'Autobiography' in Book III. Part II. of this work, I have entered in detail into the reasons which induced me to write an Autobiography at all. For the rest, I may say that for those who are interested in personal experiences, I have endeavoured as far as possible faithfully to record the passages of my outer life which preceded or attended the various stages of thought and feeling through which I have passed, and which are here detailed, as far as my memory serves me, in their orderly sequence and evolution.

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CANADA.

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MY INNER LIFE,

BEING A CHAPTER IN

PERSONAL EVOLUTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

PART I.—CANADA.

BOOK I.—BOYHOOD.

THE TWILIGHT OF MEMORY.
SUMMER.
WINTER.
A CANADIAN SABBATH.
OUR NEIGHBOURS.
PAINS AND PLEASURES.
A RHUBARB TART.
FUN AND MISCHIEF.
COCKS AND PIGEONS.
A MIDNIGHT CAMPAIGN.
MY UNCLE JAMES.
THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

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CHAPTER I.

THE TWILIGHT OF MEMORY.

I WAS born in Galt, a village in the far west of Canada on the 23rd day of April 1849. My parents had a few years earlier left their native village on the Borders of Scotland—that Liddesdale so familiar to the readers of Sir Walter Scott—and were among the number of those emigrants who in the beginning and early half of the present century sailed from the shores of the Old World to better their fortunes in the New. My father's family had been settled in and around the Borders for generations, and were among the descendants, as an old ballad verse still testifies—

'Elliots and Armstrongs
Nixons and Croziers
Raid thieves a'—'

of those ancient raiders who by their feuds and forays had for centuries kept the border-land in a state of turmoil. My mother was also a native of this same part, and was married to my father, as I have heard her say, on the morning of the day on which they set out for America. After a long and stormy voyage they reached the shores of Canada in safety, and a dreary and tedious journey in jolting waggons through the wild interior of the country at last brought them to Galt, at that time a small Scotch settlement only recently reclaimed from the virgin forest and containing a population probably of three or four hundred souls. After taking up their abode for a time

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in a little log cabin on the margin of the pine woods where the howling of the wolves alone broke the silence of the night, and shifting thence to other the like quarters as necessity or convenience determined, my father at last was able as his affairs became more prosperous to build for himself a home in the village—a low, one storied house, making up in length for what it lost in height, and with stone walls as thick as a citadel—and in this house nine years after their first arrival in the country I had the good or evil fortune to be born. I was the youngest of five children all of whom except an elder sister died in infancy and before my birth. While I was still a child my father was seized with consumption, and the fell disease after lingering for a time in uncertainty, at last hastened its ravages and before I was three and a half years of age it had snatched him from our household, leaving my mother to face the world with my sister and myself dependent on her, and with no means of subsistence but the few pounds saved by my father, together with the house and a small plot of ground.

My Mother, although over fifty years of age at the time of which I am writing, was a woman of magnificent physique and extraordinary physical vitality, erect and columnar as a statue of Minerva, her head, hands and feet small, but with neck and shoulders massive and finely proportioned. In mind she was simple and guileless as a child, her whole aim in life being to keep free from debt, to save intact the little capital which my father had left her, and to bring up her children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Her one book was the Bible, her one place of resort the Kirk, her one object of reverence the Minister, her one object of awe the Kirk-Elder. She mixed little with her neighbours, and amidst the varied dialects of the colonists among whom she had lived for so many years she still reverted in moments of excitement to the broad accent of her native land. For many years she was my sole companion (my sister who was some years my senior having interests and companions of her own), but owing to my regardlessness as she called

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it, my disobedience, love of mischief, and general pagan absorption in the things of this world, I must during all those years have grieved her good heart more than enough. We were always quarrelling and making it up again; but with it all, the fear of losing her in one of the attacks of palpitation to which she was subject, was the standing anxiety of my boyhood.

Of the few reminiscences of my childhood, the sweetest and most rose-coloured are of the visits which in summer time I made with her to friends living in the little houses and farmsteads surrounding the village. On these occasions we usually started out in the early afternoon after dinner, returning in the cool of the evening and carrying with us baskets or cans which we brought home laden with flowers, fruit, new milk, and the like. These little outings were all more or less alike in character but there was one which especially delighted me and which stamped itself on my imagination with an impress which I still retain. This was our annual visit to my aunt—my mother's sister—who since her husband's death had been living all alone in a little log cabin by the road-side in the middle of the dense pine forest surrounding the village. A few years before my parents' arrival in the country, the whole region of country round about was one dense forest of pine and maple and elm shelving down the hills on either side to the margin of the river that ran through the centre of the valley on which the village afterwards stood, and peopled only by Indian trappers and hunters, to whom in early days it had been granted as a reservation by the Crown. When I was a boy, nearly all that portion of the forest that lay in the valley flanking the river on either side had been cut down as the village grew, but it still reached forward to the brow of the surrounding hills where its tall dark pines continued in my boyhood to frown over the village in the evening twilight like dour and dusky sentinels. On the side of the river on which my aunt lived, however, the wood had been cut back from the brow of the hill for a distance of about half a mile, and was marked off from the portion

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intervening and now under cultivation by a sharp clean cut margin, standing out against it, as one approached, like the uncut portion of a field of corn. It was on the side of the road leading through this wood, and about half a mile from where it entered the forest, that the little log cottage in which my aunt lived lay embosomed among the surrounding pines. I still remember our setting out from home on the sultry summer afternoons beneath the burning sun,—I cleanly and neatly dressed in loose tartan jacket with belt and big brass buckle on which a bear or wolf's head was embossed; my mother with her parasol, black bonnet, and dress of some thin black shiny material spotted and interspersed here and there with white. We usually proceeded leisurely and by easy stages on foot, wending our way up the hill side and onwards along the road to the wood; my mother with her parasol up, and keeping close to the shadow of the high board fence, while I trotted along by her side or scampered off in front of her. Occasionally she would sit down to rest awhile in the shade of the fence, while I disdainful of the sun ranged about ahead of her looking out for nests or watching the movements of the birds and squirrels. When at last we came up to the entrance to the wood and passed within its grateful shade, we would usually sit down a second time to rest; my mother's conversation which up to this point had been strictly monosyllabic, now becoming more free and unrestrained, although still preserving its neutral character and confined to the heat, the flies, the prospect of rain, and the like; or with pathetic reference perhaps to the good firewood in the shape of fallen branches lying scattered around and going to waste and decay! As we sat there I can still see the caloric rising in shimmering wavelets from the burning road along which we had just passed, and the long-tailed squirrel oppressed by the breathless heat hopping lazily along the top of some irregular rail-fence bounding a distant cornfield. And as I listened to the pine tops waving in the clear blue sky above me, to the confused humming of innumerable insects from the wood, to the solitary tapping of the

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lonely woodpecker on the trunk of some distant tree, or peered into the darkening recesses of the forest enveloped in gloom even at noonday, a feeling of far off intangible beauty strangely mingled with awe, would come over me as I sat by my mother's side; a feeling which has ever since remained with me, and which I can still in imagination in a measure reproduce. As we walked up the gentle ascent of the road through the wood and neared the cottage, my aunt pleased and surprised at our approach would come out to meet us, her face beaming with a mild delight; and throwing aside the work she happened to have in hand, would at once make preparations for tea; while I went prying about in the little garden adjoining the house, picking and eating apples and currants and pears, listening to the cawing of the rooks, or peering through the fence in conscious security into the wood beyond, which however I was too frightened to enter alone. We usually remained till late in the afternoon, and when the high pines had ceased to throw their shadows across the glowing road, and the dusky evening had settled on the woods, we would start again on our homeward journey; my aunt accompanying us a little way down the descent from the cottage. When we parted from her and got farther along our winding way, my bright wonder of the afternoon would be all exchanged for a vague chilly fear; instead of skipping in front of my mother I would draw close to her side, holding by her dress, casting half frightened glances into the gloomy darkness of the wood now all hushed on each side of us, but in which bears and wolves were occasionally still to be found, and conjuring up vague images of unknown terrors which pressed on my young heart until we got into the open again. These vague and unpleasant feelings would still continue more or less to accompany me as I went chattering along the road by my mother's side until we arrived at the brow of the hill overlooking the village, when the cheerful laughing voices of the boys playing on the village green below, would bring back the lively and comforting sense of companionship with the world again—

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a feeling which remained with me till we reached home and the gentle twilight passed softly and not without a vague sense of infinitude into the peaceful night.

It was on one of these occasions as we were nearing home that I have a vivid remembrance of the sky changing, the wind beginning to rise, the lightning playing on the hills at the back of the house, and everything giving signs of a coming storm. When we arrived my mother went into the garden at the back to see that all was right for the night, and on returning remarked ominously in her broad Scotch vernacular and as if conscious of some impending evil, 'She'll be in again to-night. Its lightning at the back. She kens as weel as a body!' The she in question of whom we had had such disastrous experience, and whom to affect not to know would have been an insult to my mother, was none else than an old cow—an old red hornless cow—who for years had been in the habit of breaking into our garden in the middle of the night, eating such vegetables as were planted there—cauliflower, lettuce, cabbage and the like—and departing quietly before daybreak leaving wide ruin and desolation behind her. This cow was at once the despair and desperation of my mother, and all methods to keep her out of the garden had hitherto proved unavailing. The way in which the cow entered was by a gate at the bottom of the garden, which was secured in the summer months both by latch and rope; and it always remained a mystery to the last, how the cow, especially as she was without horns, could undo the latch and unfasten the rope. My mother who firmly believed that all the movements of the animal were the results of deep deliberation and reflection, affirmed that she selected just such windy and rainy nights as best ministered to her nefarious designs, bringing to the task all the ingenuity, subtlety, and resource of the most experienced house-breaker. Whether my mother's hypothesis were right, that the cow selected these particular nights because she thought that in the whistling of the wind, the rattling of the rain, and the creaking of doors and

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hinges she could pass through the gate undetected by her (for my mother always figured the old cow as watching her with the same suspicion that she watched the cow!) I cannot pretend to say, but certain it was that the cow almost always selected these windy rainy nights for her operations, and so far added the weight of positive testimony to a hypothesis which, as we shall see, my mother had arrived at from *à priori* speculations on the innate nature of the cow herself. On such nights as the one I am describing we would all retire to bed uneasily, my mother giving evidence by her general silence of the weight that hung over her mind. When we got to bed it was usual with me to go off to sleep at once regardless of cow or cabbages, but my mother would lie awake listening intently between the gusts of wind for sounds of the enemy's approach. And sure enough as she had predicted, I would be roused in the middle of the night by my mother getting quickly out of bed, and on my inquiring in a startled manner as to what was the matter, she would reply in an excited undertone, as if the old cow might hear her before she could compass her revenge,—'She's in!' These mystic monosyllables were sufficient; I understood it all, and as my mother after throwing on hurriedly some light superficial covering, sallied forth taking with her a long thick maple pole with which we used to poke up the logwood fire, I would sit up in bed to listen to the coming fray with a light frivolity and, I fear, secret delight, which in a matter so serious, had my mother known it, would have cost me dear. I had not long to wait however, for presently I would hear the muffled thuds reverberating from the sullen ribs of the old marauder, until at last a strain and crash as the cow forced her distended bulk through the too narrow gate and fell on the slippery boarding underneath, would reach my ear; when all would be silent again except the whistling winds. A few moments later my mother after refastening the gate would reappear in the bedroom muttering exasperation, or dejectedly murmuring as if she saw no end to these encounters but the

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grave 'She's given me my death of cold again to-night,' adding however with that touch of self-gratulation which the consciousness of the summary justice she had executed on the brute inspired, 'I've given her such a drilling, however, that she'll not dare be back again to-night, I'll promise her,'—after which partial consolation and relief to her feelings she would return to bed and sleep without further anxiety until the morning.

So periodical, indeed, did these visitations year after year become, that I grew up to regard them as part of the established order of things, and as being no more extraordinary than the return of the seasons or the regulated changes of the moon. But as I grew older and began to think for myself, it occurred to me that instead of accepting them with the Hindoo passivity and resignation of my mother, they might be prevented in a great measure at least by complaining to the owner, or if that failed by appealing to the authorities themselves. Accordingly on the morning after one of these midnight encounters, when my mother seemed deeply depressed, I ventured to suggest this as a reasonable course to follow under the circumstances; but instead of receiving it as a happy thought it seemed to strike her with amazement, and with a confused cry of 'Hush!' in which fear and surprise curiously mingled, she subsided into silence. The reason of this show of alarm which she seemed so anxious to hide, I afterwards discovered to be that she regarded the owner of the cow—a woman living at the head of the street —with even more dread if possible than the cow herself! This old 'mischief maker,' as she was in the habit of designating the owner, used to stand during the greater part of the day in the gateway in front of her house with arms akimbo, her thick frame in short skirts almost blocking the entrance, and her hair twisted menacingly and as if for an encounter around the back of her short thick neck and thick square head; and from this gateway every now and again she would issue and range up and down the street in front of her house with a

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slow and deliberate but tread-on-the-tail-of-my-coat attitude and mien, seizing such opportunities as afforded themselves for picking a quarrel (as for example when a neighbour's boy had had a row with one of her boys) and when she had at last succeeded, falling on her opponent with such precipitation and show of violence as to have become the terror of the whole surrounding neighbourhood. This it was which accounted for my mother's refusal to comply with my suggestion, and for her startled cry of 'hush' when I ventured to bring it before her. The fact was, the old cow and her owner had evidently become so associated or even identified in nature and attribute in my mother's mind, that she could not contemplate them apart. When she saw the cow she thought of her owner, and when she saw the owner she thought of the cow! But you could see that although not given to contemplation, when she took time to consider the matter, her real opinion was that the qualities of the cow were really not so much original in her as in some mysterious way derived from her owner. The intellectual acuteness and subtlety which in unfastening ropes and opening latches she so much feared and admired, she seemed to regard as due rather to a moral depravity, and the moral depravity again she fully believed to be directly due in some occult way (analogous to witchcraft I often thought she figured it!) to the malignant disposition of the owner. And I verily believe that could the cow have been sold to a different owner or in any other way been taken beyond the reach of the malign influence of her own mistress, my mother would have had a vague but real hope of her reformation. But this was not to be. The cow remained with her original owner, and for some years longer her nocturnal depredations continued as before. At last however as the cow grew older, and the arrangements about the gate had been completely altered, these forays ceased altogether or grew much more intermittent; and finally after I had grown to be quite a big lad, the old cow herself was sent to her long and last account by a stroke of lightning on

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the top of the hill overlooking the village. I heard the news from some of the boys, and on proceeding to the spot to ascertain the truth for myself, I came on the swollen carcase of the old brute still warm and lying on its side, with a scathed and blackened streak passing from the spine over the distended ribs; and can well remember my mingled feelings as I realized that the old general had actually been brought to the ground at last. I rushed home full of the glad event, and when I announced the welcome news to my mother she at first looked incredulous as if it were too good to be true, but on my detailing the time, place, and occasion with all circumstantiality, she paused, and as the memories and vicissitudes of their long struggles came over her mind she turned aside, and in a tone of mingled pathos and relief murmured audibly 'the auld sorrow! She's weel gane! she's weel gane!

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CHAPTER II.

SUMMER.

THE games and amusements of my boyhood included nearly all those in vogue in England at the present time—marbles, tops, swimming, boating, cricket, skating, foot-ball and the like—together with others altogether unknown here, or from the nature of the climate practised under different conditions.

In the early days of the settlement a great dam had been built across the river at the head of the village, in order that its water might be diverted into canals which had been dug parallel with it on either side, and so afford the power necessary to run the various woollen, flour, and other mills which then or afterwards were built along the line of its banks. At the junction of this dam with the bank of the river on the side on which I lived, a great rock shelved down in horizontal strata to within three or four feet of the water; and around it as around a promontory the river flowed gently over the fall of the dam. From off this rock I got my first lesson in swimming, having been thrown from it into the deep dark waters one evening by one of the elder boys who immediately plunged in after me before I had time to sink, and getting behind me upheld me while I splashed and spluttered my way back as best I could to the shore.

But our principal summer amusement was Cricket. During

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the long vacation and in the intervals of bathing, a number of us boys might be seen going to one or other of the open spaces on the outskirts of the town, and there after pitching our wickets and choosing our sides, preparing to have a game. To this game I was intensely devoted, and expended on it more time, energy, and perseverance than I have since given to the gravest pursuits; although in my earlier years it had to be played under the most primitive and unfavourable conditions. Our wickets were made usually of broomsticks sawed into equal regulation lengths and sharpened at the points, their tops being notched for the reception of little pieces of twig which we used as 'bails.' The balls were home-made, consisting of a central nucleus of cork around which were disposed various layers of rags, strips of cotton, and old bits of twine, all cemented together into a hard homogeneous rotundity by means of pitch, tar, or the gummy distillations of the pine trees. The ball thus prepared was then taken to the local shoemaker to be covered with leather, and was returned to us, hard, indeed, and more or less round, but standing out at the seams like mountain ranges, in high embossed ridges without modesty or attempt at concealment! The bats too were usually home-made, each boy making his own for himself out of pine or beechwood, in such style and configuration as most suited his fancy. They were usually free from any attempt at artistic beauty, and rarely had their surfaces planed, much less varnished or even covered with a rough coating of paint; but when as sometimes happened one of the boys would bring to the field a proper bat made of willow,—light, flexible, beautifully varnished and with handle nicely wound and corded,—it was passed around among the rest of us for inspection, and handled with a species of idolatry. The ground, too, on which we played had to be sought for and found among and between the stumps that dotted the hills, commons, and other vacant spaces of the village. We would usually divide into parties of two on these occasions, and would scour the country in all directions like so

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many surveyors; halting here and there, and turning to all points of the compass until we came on a stretch of ground between the stumps sufficiently level to justify us in pitching the wickets.

In those days the great English Eleven had just visited the Province, and the fame of their achievements had spread far and wide among the boys. 'Round-arm' bowling, as it was called, was our great ambition, and from the great difficulty of pitching the balls straight when delivered in that way, offered to those who could compass it the shortest and most certain cut to distinction. Like the rest of the boys I was fired with the ambition of becoming a round arm bowler, and used to rise in the early morning before the dew was off the grass, set up a single wicket (of broomstick) at the bottom of the garden, and with an adjoining fence and barn as back-stop behind, bowl away at it by the hour together. But in spite of incessant and assiduous practice continued over many years, and in spite of the speed with which I could deliver the balls, I never attained either in pitch or directness of aim to anything beyond a respectable proficiency. With my batting, too, I was equally assiduous but not more successful; for although a free hitter when the balls were off the wicket, and a diligent observer and speculator as to the way in which the various balls were best to be played, I was uncertain in my stop, and was never able to place the balls in the field with any sureness or satisfaction to myself.

When the weather was unfavourable for swimming, cricket, or kite-flying, I was usually to be found fishing off the rocks that lined the banks of the river at and below the dam at the head of the village. This sport too, like cricket, had to be pursued with materials of a very primitive and rudimentary kind. So far as I can remember, a fishing-rod in the proper and accepted sense of that term, with its joints and sections and reel, and its light, lithe, and elastic structure, was unknown among the boys of the time. The rods in use, or

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'poles' as they were called, consisted originally of saplings of elm, tamarack, and cedar which grew in the woods or dense swamps in the neighbourhood of the village, and which were selected because in proportion to their length they were either lighter and straighter, or thinner and tougher than any other wood; the cedar and tamarack being especially light and straight, the elm and beech especially tough and thin. To obtain these saplings we were in the habit of going to the woods or swamps in parties of two or three, and after selecting as many as we wanted, cutting them down, and removing the smaller branches, we would throw them over our shoulders and start again on our way homewards. When we got home we would remove the bark and hang the poles up to dry for a time in the open air, after which they were ready for use; precautions having already been taken to remove a sufficient portion of the thin and tapering top to ensure the strength necessary to stand the dead weight and pull to which they were afterwards to be subjected. The lines we used were tied to a notch cut on the end of the 'pole,' and consisted of cording of such strength and thickness, that judiciously expended from a proper reel they might have secured or impeded the escape of some of the greatest monsters of the deep! At the end of the line a hook, large, bare and ugly looking, was attached, and above the hook a 'sinker' made of a piece of lead and welded to the line, and of such size and weight that when it was thrown into the water it was like the heaving overboard of a small anchor! The bait, too, was of the most simple character. No gaudy flies of variegated plumage, no hooks fantastically dressed with the softest tail feathers of the eagle-owl—nothing but the simple garden worm transfixed in a series of involutions by the bare and ruthless hook (on which indeed it continued to wriggle after being thrown into the water) and without further effort at concealment. The spot usually selected by us for fishing was the comparatively still water which eddied back into the side of

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the bank just below the dam; and here in the evening after school hours some eight or ten of us might be seen sitting in line, 'poles' in hand, on the perpendicular rocks overhanging the water, watching the old bottle-corks which we used for floats, with a keen and absorbing interest. Nor in the fishing to which we were accustomed was it essential to success that we should continually thrash the water with our lines as the current carried them down; on the contrary when once the sinker was thrown in, it itself sought the bottom with such directness and precipitation, and lay there with such an evident determination not to move, that you could prop your pole between a couple of stones and go away and leave it for an hour or so, with the certainty of finding your line in precisely the same spot on your return, unmoved by wind or stream! The fish that haunted the river were freshwater fish about the size of a sea trout or very small salmon; and were known by such homely or expressive epithets as 'suckers,' 'stone-carriers,' 'mullets,' and the like. These fish were all very bony, especially the mullets, a circumstance which gave rise to the hypothesis by a local philosopher, that they were the last fish the Lord had made, and that he had thrown the bones in by handfuls! When once the bait was taken, no fine or dextrous manipulation was necessary to land the fish, no running them up and down the stream for half an hour at a stretch playing out line and taking it in again, and the whole executed with the greatest skill and caution. The line was so thick that it would not break under the most extreme strain brought to bear on it (I have known one bear the strain of three boys pulling at it with all their might, when it had got stuck), and the 'poles' although absolutely small, were relatively to an ordinary rod as the mast of some great admiral! The landing of a fish was in consequence a matter purely of what I have heard characterized as 'main strength and ignorance!' It was raised out of the water by one long dead heave, which lifted it high into the air over the shoulder of its

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captor and flung it foul against the rocks behind with such ruthless violence, as to leave one under no necessity of afterwards putting it to death. And so it went on, first one boy and then another stolidly and without sense of humour flinging the fish behind him on to the relentless rocks; until the evening closed around and one after another picking up his own fish and slinging them on a line or piece of twig, took each his several homeward way.

Personally I cared little at any time for fishing. I did not like freshwater fish as an article of diet, nor did I care for the sport in itself. When the fish were taking well and were being flung into the air in flights on all sides of me, it soon became monotonous; when they would not take at all, it was uninteresting. Besides I was restless and kept changing my position too often, I was careless about my worms, or would go away and leave my pole propped up between two stones for too long together, and more than all when I did get a 'take' I was so eager to secure it that I often either missed it altogether, or pulled the hook sheer through the creature's mouth! The result as might be expected was that I was in general unsuccessful. But as is so often seen even in the smallest village, there was one boy among us who seemed to the rest of us to have a kind of genius for fishing. He was a negro boy who through lameness was obliged to walk with a crutch, but a boy of great humour and sagacity, one of the best scholars in the school, and much respected and even feared (for he used his crutch with effect) by the rest of the boys. In order to try and divert the fish to our own hooks, we were in the habit of getting to the river before him and taking our seats in those favoured positions from which we had seen him pull them out so brilliantly; hoping thereby that some of his luck might attend us. But it was of no avail. When he came too late he would sit down anywhere, laying his crutch down by his side and arranging his hooks and worms with the greatest composure; and after we had perhaps been waiting in

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vain all the evening for a 'bite,' he would presently 'throw in,' and in a short time would begin pulling out the fish before our very eyes as if he had been on his own favoured spot, to our mingled disgust, admiration, and despair. The secret of his success always remained more or less a mystery to us, although any number of theories were started by the boys to account for it. Some believing in the doctrine that a rolling stone gathers no moss, thought that his lameness rendering him disinclined to change his place was the cause of his success; others believed that it lay in a point of disposition or character, and was owing to the fact that he sat so quietly and let fall the 'sinker' so gently that in spite of its portentous size, the fish were not frightened or disturbed; while others, again, with some more or less confused idea of a Special Providence, felt that it was because his family had nothing else to live upon, it having been reported that in the summer months fish was their chief if not only article of food. But the truth was perhaps, little as we liked to admit it, that his success was due to his better knowledge of the art—of how to adjust his worm, of where the fish were likely to be lying, and of how best to hook them when they had taken the bait.

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CHAPTER III.

WINTER.

DURING the long and frosty months of the Canadian winter, the face of the country was covered with a continuous and unbroken sheeting of snow, all agricultural operations had in consequence to be suspended, and beyond the feeding of horses and cattle there was little for the farmers to do. They accordingly seized the opportunity thus afforded them, to bring into town for sale on their smoothly running sleighs, great loads of the fire-wood which lay in the country round in accumulating piles as the original forests were cleared and the land brought under cultivation; and which at that time was almost the sole article of fuel. Corn also had to be withdrawn from the bins and brought into town for the supply of the local flour mills, and hay and straw for the horses and cows that were kept by numbers of people of all classes. The streets were thus kept alive and busy during the dreary winter months by the appearance in all quarters of the town of farmers seated on the tops of their loads of wood or corn, and muffled up to the ears with blankets and furs, through which their beards projected hoary with frost or matted with the icicles deposited from their condensed and steaming breath. Besides farmers, there were also to be seen in the streets local carriers who made their living by removing furniture, wood, and other odds and ends from place to place, as well as the

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staff of permanent officials employed by the large manufacturers in carrying flour, hardware, machinery and other merchandize to and from the station. And as the evening approached, light and ornamental sleighs—'cutters' they were called—made their appearance in the leading thoroughfares, drawn by fast-trotting horses driven by opulent citizens out for a drive, who with their wives and families enveloped in muffs and furs reclined on bear or tiger skins, the margins of which hung as ornament over the back and sides of the sleigh. With this mingled stream of traffic the town was kept merry all day long with the jingling of the sleigh-bells which ranged through all the gamut of sound from the light merry tinkling of the open silver bells on the fast-stepping trotters, to the dull heavy monotone of the round closed metal hung in rows around the necks of the farmers' drays. One of our main amusements on our way to and from the school was to jump on these sleighs as they passed and repassed, ride with them to the point at which they turned out of the main line of traffic, and return with others passing in the opposite direction, and so on up and down for hours together.

During the month of January a thaw usually set in, and the greater part of the snow covering the face of the country almost disappeared. This change in the weather lasting as it generally did a week or more, was known as the 'January thaw,' and was the only break in the long monotony of frost and snow that covered the ground from the beginning of December to the end of March. At this period, and again in the Spring when the snow was finally disappearing, the weather was so mild, and the roads so sloppy, that there ceased to be the active pleasure felt in hanging on sleighs that there was in the period of keen and bracing frost. Skating being out of the question, the only amusement that remained open to us was snowballing, a sport to which the very softness of the snow, and the ease with which it could be made into balls, invited us. The pleasure derived from this sport was greatly enhanced by the

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opportunity it afforded us of paying off some of the old scores which had been gradually accumulating at compound interest since the beginning of the season. As a species of warfare, snowballing was carried on sometimes in an irregular guerilla manner, each one skirmishing for his own hand from behind fences and street-corners, and sometimes, especially when the enemy was strong, in regular platoons drawn up in force and drilled to harmonious and concerted action. In the latter case we were in the habit of selecting for our base of operations certain positions in the various streets, which from their situation and surroundings were peculiarly adapted for attack or defence. The most favoured of these was connected with a carriage-shop in one of the main thoroughfares, and consisted of a permanent open plateau or platform some twenty feet above the ground, supported on wooden pillars, and used for the exposure of waggons and carriages previous to their being finished in the adjoining work-rooms. To this spot we were in the habit of repairing in numbers during the snow-balling season, there to await such objects of our wantonness or revenge as might chance to pass along the street and pavements below. We were all as a rule good marksmen, it being one of our chief amusements to go in the early summer mornings to the surrounding hills, our pockets full of stones, to chase the birds which were to be found there in great numbers and which rose on all sides of us as we walked along. There was therefore little hope of escape for any unhappy wight who chanced to pass along, and on whom we were resolved to open fire. But we had to be very wary and prudent in our selection of the objects of attack. For although we were to a certain extent covered in our rear by various lofts and lumber rooms to which we could retreat when pursued, and although we could escape by one staircase as our pursuer came up the other, still we could not always depend on these advantages when pressed by an enraged and determined foe. In a general way therefore we were chary of meddling with

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foot-passengers, especially those who if really aggravated could give successful chase; for when caught we were almost sure to have our faces washed with snow, a punishment regarded by the boys as more or less of a stigma and personal disgrace. Women, too, of all ages and conditions were from a habitual chivalry exempt from attack, as were also lawyers, constables, schoolmasters, and others directly or remotely associated in our minds with some form of retribution, and towards whom, I remember, we stood in a secret and unavowed but real and habitual awe! But the appearance of an uproarious inebriate rolling along was always the signal for a universal fire, and great was our excitement, while waiting until he came within range, as we heard in imagination the snowballs squashing on his back and sides, and figured to ourselves the look of helpless impotence and rage with which he would regard us. One old chronic and besotted, but silent and sullen toper, with face purple and bloated as a London cabman, and who lived alone a mile or two out of the town, used to pass regularly every day all the year round on his way to the dram-shop for his daily supply of whiskey (a quart it was said!), carrying under his arm the old brown stone jar in which it was contained. This old sot furnished to us boys all the conditions of an ideal target, and his appearance in the distance was hailed with as much excitement by us as a fox at covert; for although we rained snowballs on him from head to foot as he passed along, he gave no sign of pause, shewed no emotion either of surprise or fear, and except the muttered curses which were suspected of escaping from him when the fire was at its height, he passed through his heavy ordeal (holding fast to his whiskey bottle!) in sullen silence. But our fixed and habitual victims were the farmers, especially those who in the frosty weather had been laying up long and unpaid scores by whipping us off their sleighs. Their hour had at last come, and as they could not leave their horses to give chase, they were completely at our mercy; and besides in their cramped and confined positions on

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their sleighs they had not sufficient margin and freedom to dodge or escape the fire which we poured on them with scathing and relentless severity. As they came gaily along in the distance seated on the tops of their wood-piles or bags of corn, capering and even lightly coruscating with their whips in a pleasing self-complacency and unconscious of what was awaiting them, we would squat down in line at a little distance from the edge of the platform with a dozen or more snowballs each ready at our feet, like so many cannon balls, and when they came within range, we would start up like the old Guard at Waterloo, and rain such a concentrated fire on their unlucky persons as to annihilate all emotions save that of instant and unconditional escape. Others coming behind and witnessing the fate of their predecessors, conscious too of their own unpopularity, and seeing no alternative but to turn or push their way through, would cover their faces and heads with their blankets, and putting the whip to their horses, like old Romans would submit to their fate without a word; while others again, guarding their heads as best they could with their arms and furs, would good-humouredly run the gauntlet, turning round when out of range and by impudent gestures conveying to us their sense of defiance and contempt. But the friends of the boys, the old farmers who had let us mount their sleighs and climb up around them, and who seemed assured of our good intentions towards them, would come smiling along in conscious security; nor was their confidence abused, for as they came sailing past us waving their hands towards us in token of good will, we would drop our snowballs, and giving them three lusty and rousing cheers as a mark of our esteem, would wave them on their journey God-speed.

Along both sides of the river-basin on which the town was built, the hills rose perpendicularly from the bosom of the valley, and the roads running out over them into the country instead of passing directly up the steep ascent, which would have made traffic almost impossible, followed a somewhat

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winding and circuitous course along the brow of the hill. There were two or three of these roads on each side of the town, and one of our principal amusements in winter when there was no skating, consisted in riding and racing down them in 'hand sleighs.' These sleighs were made of a pair of parallel runners three or four feet in length turned up in front and shaped like the runners of a skate; the runners were fastened together by two crossbars, and the whole (which stood about a foot above the ground) covered by a smooth planed board, and painted and ornamented according to the taste and fancy of the owner. Like race-horses, these sleighs had each its own name which was painted on its upper surface, and, as with race-horses, these names had their origin in associations of an accidental, capricious, or appropriate character. Like race-horses, too, the sleighs gradually worked themselves into the affections of their owners, and were regarded often, especially if they were swift coursers, with a species of fondness bordering on love. They could be either bought ready-made at the shops or made according to order at one or other of the carriage-works in the town; and when built of the best wood, shod with the best iron, and ornamentally finished and painted, bore a higher price than was within my reach. Among my earliest remembrances is that of standing shivering on one of the hill-tops while the boys were riding down on their sleighs, and soliciting a ride first from one and then from another, in return for which I would give them perhaps a piece of chewing-gum, or accompany them on an errand, or help them with any odd jobs which they had to do about their own homes. As was natural I longed painfully for a sleigh of my own, and importuned those of the boys who had them, to exchange theirs with me for any or all of the articles in my possession—jack-knives, straps, old pairs of skates and the like. But all was in vain, for the whole inventory of my belongings did not approach in value the poorest and meanest of these sleighs, and my unsatisfied longings in consequence became in

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time so acute and intense that could I have stolen one without the chance of detection I must have done so. I was not to be beaten, however, and finding that I could get one in no other way I at last endeavoured to make one for myself. I got together some old pinewood planks, cut them into proper lengths, borrowed a plane and smoothed them, marked out the curve of the runners with a pencil, and by means of knife, saw, and plane, managed to rough-hew them into some sort of shape. I then united them together with cross-bars, and covered the whole with a simple unpainted board. It was, I must confess, a rude and unpolished structure, but would have answered its purpose sufficiently well, could I have had its runners shod with the kind of iron necessary to give it speed; for this was of course the one absolute necessity in a sleigh, without which all other qualities counted for nothing. The iron required was wrought-iron, half-round or flat, and of such thickness that the heads of the screw-nails with which it was fastened to the runner, could be sunk into it and so present a surface of polished glassy smoothness to the snow. But to get this iron and to have it fastened to the runners was quite beyond my power, as it was perhaps the most expensive of the items that went to make up the entire cost. I was obliged therefore to put up sorrowfully with such inferior iron as I could find; and after some searching I at last came upon some old rusted sheet-iron hoops among the *débris* of an old water-barrel which had fallen to pieces and lay rotting on the ground at the bottom of our garden. But my misery was only then beginning, for owing to the thinness of these hoops you could neither sink the screw-heads into their substance, nor could you file them down to the level of the iron, without the danger of their slipping through altogether. I was obliged therefore to let them project more or less, thus impeding by their friction the movement of the sleigh, and forever destroying its chance of becoming a racing-star of the first or even the tenth magnitude. Nevertheless such for a time was my fondness for this rude and misshapen

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offspring of my own labour, that like a mother with her deformed and rickety child, I watched over it with an anxiety and care that I could not have bestowed on the most beautiful and highly-finished production of the shops! As nothing, however, could make its appearance presentable, I concentrated all my energies on endeavouring to make the irons as smooth and bright as possible. I filed away at the projecting screw-heads, rounding off their edges as far as was possible without filing them off altogether, rubbed the irons down daily with a brick to get off all the rust, and seized every opportunity that offered of attaching it to a horse-sleigh, and riding it a mile or two into the country with the view of giving to the runners the last degree of smoothness and polish of which they were capable. So interested, indeed, was I in the progress they were making, that after every ride down the hill I would turn up the sleigh to see whether there was any difference in their smoothness and brilliancy. One frosty moonlight night, accordingly, on turning up the sleigh in this way in front of our house, I fancied in the silvery light that I noticed a greater degree of smoothness and brightness than usual, and proceeded to run my finger along the runners to feel. But not being able to satisfy myself in this way, it occurred to me that the tongue was a finer and more sensitive organ than either the eye or the finger, and accordingly I stooped down and put my tongue to the iron intending to run it along it as I had done my finger, when to my horror I found it had stuck fast to the iron and could not be removed! Thereupon I set up such a yell that my mother hearing me from within the house rushed out to see what was the matter, and finding me on the ground fast in the embraces of the sleigh, breathed on the cruel and all too tenacious steel at the point of its adhesion, and in a little while succeeded in releasing me. In my struggles however I had torn the leaders of my tongue, my mouth was full of blood, and to this circumstance my mother always attributed a slight lisp which remains with me to this day. As I grew older I began

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to lose interest in and to be ashamed of this old home-made sleigh. It was so ugly and clumsy that the boys were constantly making fun of it; its runners too being made of a full broadside of wood instead of a light rim supported by upright pillars, it roared as it ran down the hill like the noise in the night-wind of some distant train! But worse than all it had no speed, and in spite of all the care I had lavished on it, was distanced and left behind by the slowest laggard on the hill. I accordingly broke it up at last in disgust, and used it for firewood; and after a time succeeded in acquiring (by exchange as usual) another and properly made one, which from the colour of the stripes painted on the seat became known to the boys as the 'Red White and Blue.' It belonged to a lame boy who could not use it to advantage, but it had as I saw from the first, all the points of a first-class racer; and it was not long before, with good jockeying, it came to be regarded in popular phrase as 'the bully of the hill.'

Sleigh-racing was with us boys, as the reader will already have surmised, a source of the keenest and most intense excitement and enjoyment. In the afternoon after school-hours and in the moonlight evenings, great droves of boys would congregate with their sleighs from all parts of the town at the hill which was known to be in the best condition, and once there, it was inevitable that the sleigh-riding would sooner or later end in racing. For this end the sleighs were taken back a little distance from the brow of the hill, and handicapped according to their reputed merits at various distances behind each other—the slowest being stationed in front, the fastest at the farthest point in the rear. At a given signal they all started, the boys stooping down over their sleighs and pushing them with a run to the edge of the hill, at which point they all jumped on and went sailing along down the hill one after another at great speed, the faster sleighs gradually coming up to and overtaking the slower, until they reached the plain, when they gradually got slower and slower until at last they came to a full stop at various

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points (in some instances a quarter of a mile) from their starting point—the fastest of course going the farthest before it came to rest. The boys would then all walk leisurely up the hill again, dragging their sleighs after them by ropes attached at each end to the runners, and when they reached the top, after some re-arrangement perhaps of the handicapping, they would start again on another race, and so on over and over again for hours together. Little episodes, too, were constantly occurring to give variety and add excitement to the racing. Sometimes one sleigh would run into another and the two getting hopelessly entangled all would upset together; at other times a sleigh would get off the beaten track and running against a lump of ice or stone would upset, and rider and sleigh would go rolling one over another in the snow; or again, if the rider happened to be a novice and did not know how to steer, the sleigh would run away with him over an embankment, up against a stump, or into a fence or stone wall; but in most cases without, to my recollection, any very serious damage to either rider or sleigh.

In sleigh-racing as in horse-racing, success was almost as much due to good jockeying as to the inherent qualities of the sleigh, the object being to know in each instance at what point of the sleigh to throw the main weight of the body, and how to distribute this weight over the whole surface so as to subject the sleigh to the least possible amount of friction from the snow. If you threw your weight too far forwards the front of the runner ran into the snow like a plough, if too far backwards, the back ran into it like a brake. There were two methods of riding, in the one the rider lay flat on his stomach and, as with a pair of sculls, steered by touching the points of the toes to the ground on each side as occasion required; in the other he sat upright on one hip, and steered by working the free foot from side to side like a rudder. Both methods were employed in racing according to the choice of the rider, but the first method was best for speed, as it offered less surface to the wind, and you could more equitably distribute your weight over the

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entire surface of the sleigh; the second method, riding side-saddle as it was called, was the only one that could be employed when more than one person was seated on the sleigh, a circumstance which was not unfrequent, the largest sleighs carrying sometimes as many as five or six. In these cases you sat your companion on the sleigh in front of you and let him hold the rope, as if it were a rein, in his hands, at the same time keeping his head well on one side that you might be able to see the direction in which you were steering. Little girls came out frequently to the hill either alone or with their brothers, and I well remember the little internal flutter with which we would offer them a ride, the gentleness with which we would put them on the sleigh, the swelling pride and importance with which we would steer them down the hill, and the gallantry with which instead of letting them walk we would ourselves draw them up again.

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CHAPTER IV.

A CANADIAN SABBATH.

UP to this point in my history, my week-day life with its free and joyous absorption in the games and sports of boyhood, had been, in spite of the restriction put on me at home by our narrow means, a pure and undiluted happiness—throwing off gaily all obstructions from its path, and contracting no stain from its various and manifold activities. But the compensation and Nemesis came with the Sundays, into which I was duly plunged as the weeks came round as into a bath, but which, far from purifying me, left a trail over all my boyhood, and produced lasting effects in after years. The village in which I was brought up was dotted on all sides for miles around with the homesteads of the farmers who in the early days of the settlement had come from Scotland with their wives and families, and had taken up the land in freehold, bringing with them the stern Calvinism of their native land with all its harsh and gloomy traditions. The village itself, too, had been settled and filled in largely by people of the same extraction, but included as well a number of English Methodists from Devon and Cornwall, speaking with strong provincial accents, and a sprinkling of Yankees ever on the wing, but bringing with them the Puritan traditions of New England. The consequence was that the genius of Puritanism everywhere reigned supreme, colouring more or less perceptibly the everyday life and habits of the people, but setting its

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indelible seal and impress on what my mother called 'the Sabbath Day.' On that day all labour even to the most elementary operations of cooking was suspended or reduced to a minimum; no sound of traffic was anywhere to be heard; the streets were hushed and deserted; the inhabitants remained within doors between the hours of service as if divine judgment were abroad; and when they appeared at church-time, walked softly along with their Bibles under their arms; while the reverberation of the melancholy bells calling to one another from hill to valley, seemed to announce an universal expiation. On my mother's simple mind all this fell as naturally as the return of morning and evening; to her, Sundays were in their essence holy days, and the ministers who held the key to Scripture and were believed to gather up in themselves the decrees and ordinances of God, were, like Brahmins, regarded by her as sacred. 'They are all good men' she used mournfully to say on the occasion of some revolt of mine; and as the accredited exponents of all that pertained to religion and morals, they were believed by her to be in essential nature superior to criticism; the only freedom of comment she permitted either herself or me being such purely personal preferences as might be felt for one of their number over another. Accordingly when Sunday came round with its silence and gloom, it already found her ready to follow all its ordinances and submit to all its renunciations in a spirit of pure and simple piety. With myself on the other hand the eclipse of a day would under any circumstances at that time have been a real hardship, but the peculiar gloom and solemnity of the special religious services through which I had to pass, became more and more as time went on, a personal infliction pure and unredeemed. The reader, therefore, will readily understand that on waking on the sunny Sunday mornings with the little birds twittering on the lilac trees at the back of the house, and the smell of the apple-blossoms coming through the partially opened windows, at the remembrance that it was

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Sunday the gloom as of some great ordeal oppressed me, and in that half-conscious state between sleep and wake when all sensations, but especially those of pain, are magnified, and fall, as it were, raw on the soul, without those intervening cushions which the whirling activities of life place between us and our sorest troubles, a confused pain as of some troubled dream would settle on my mind. When I rose and dressed, the acuteness of this feeling would pass off somewhat, leaving behind it only a general deadness and depression as I realized in imagination the dreary stretch of day before me. At the breakfast-table my mother sat silent and reserved, and on her face the full solemnity of the day on which we had entered seemed to have settled with all its force. The expression she wore was not so much that of severity or of sanctity as of injury; an expression which from long experience I knew well how to interpret, and which was intended to plainly tell me that on this day of reckoning she was feeling the weight not so much of her own (for her life was pure and guileless) as of my transgressions and sins! Accordingly whenever I ventured to ask a question or make an observation however inoffensive or neutral, she would answer me in monosyllables and in a tone of calm but injured solemnity. Everywhere the house had the air as if some great expiation were going on, as if sin and guilt clung to the door-posts; and to this impression, the words of my sister as she sat repeating to herself aloud the lesson from the shorter catechism in a monotonous sing-song, lent additional emphasis. For this catechism, it may be necessary to inform the reader, contained not only the Ten Commandments and other plain precepts of morality, but abounded in definitions and proofs from Scripture of such high and abstruse themes as the 'effectual calling,' 'justification by faith,' 'original sin' and the like; and behind all these and the iron predestination that hemmed them in, the presence of a frowning and angry Deity, whom for a long time I remember figuring as some righteous and incensed Kirk Elder, everywhere unpleasantly loomed!

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To escape from an atmosphere so joyless and depressing, I was glad to steal out into the shed at the back of the house, and there, beyond the eye of my mother, indulge my fantasy in designs for kites, cricket-balls, or other materials of play, wearying for the morrow to come to carry them into execution; or I would wander out into the garden, and climbing to the top of the fence would look wistfully up and down the street to see if anything were stirring, or any of my playfellows were abroad. But the streets were usually as silent as the house, and my schoolfellows, more trained to habits of obedience or subdued to the genius of the day than myself, if seen at all would be seen sitting reading at their windows, indifferent to the salutes which I waved them from the distance.

But long before the Church bells began ringing, my mother already dressed and prepared to start would call me in from the garden, and in my very early days would take me by the hand or allow me to hold on by her skirts, ever and again as I dragged behind to look at the birds or the fruit trees on the way, pulling me to her side as from some evil and forbidden thing. As I grew older, however, I was allowed to find my own way to church, and this in itself proved a vast comfort, and helped greatly to relieve the tedium and length of the morning. For thus loosened from my moorings and my mother out of the way, I was free to roam about as I pleased, and when at last after locking the front door and stealthily secreting the key behind the window sill, she sallied forth, I would watch her unobserved from some street corner in the distance until she passed out of sight. Onwards she would saunter softly along the grass by the side of the street, her parasol up, and in her best Sunday dress and shawl—a Paisley one, I remember, which she wore inside out the better to preserve it!—onwards and along beneath the overhanging trees with their sweet-smelling blossoms until she turned the corner of the market-place (I following at a distance) and was lost to view. When she was once well out of the way, I was free to

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roam as I have said where I chose, until the church bells began to ring, amusing myself for the most part by looking for birds-nests in the hollows of stumps or among the shrubs and brushwood of the surrounding hills, or by pelting the frogs in the mill-pond at the back of the church.

This church, or 'meeting-house' as my mother called it, was a large and roomy wooden edifice built after the manner of an English Dissenting Chapel, with the pulpit at one end, which was approached by a double flight of stairs, and with galleries running around its remaining sides. The pew which my mother occupied was in the front row of the gallery near the pulpit, and from this point of vantage the whole congregation, with the exception of that part lying immediately beneath us, lay stretched out around and below us on all sides. To this pew in the early summer morning and long before the church bells began to ring or the dust from the morning's sweeping had had time to settle, would my mother come, and taking her seat in the silent and empty tabernacle would sit there calm and motionless with an expression on her face of serene and tranquil enjoyment, her thoughts unknown to me, but her whole being seeming to derive some real though mysterious satisfaction from the presence of the sanctuary.

When the church bells began to ring, I would enter and take my seat by my mother's side, and a few minutes before they ceased, the congregation, many of whom had been standing outside in groups talking of the weather and the crops, would begin to drop in one by one and moving softly along the matted aisles take their seats in silence. They consisted almost entirely of farmers from the country round, their wives, and grown up sons and daughters—old men bent and tottering, with heads grey, bald, and bedewed with perspiration which ever and again they wiped with their faded old-fashioned red pocket-handkerchiefs; young men and men of middle age in homespun, sunburnt up to the ears, and with their coarse hair cropped close and short and standing stiffly on end about the

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crown like the surface of an upturned brush; old grannies shakey and lean, their mouths fallen in and faces wrinkled like parchment; and young women in wide circumambient crinoline, wearing huge brooches and ear-rings, and with their well-oiled hair brushed in wavy lines off the forehead in a style which to-day is no longer anywhere to be seen. In they came one after another in solemn silence, defiling as they went along from the different aisles into their respective pews until the whole church was filled. Presently the door of the side aisle would open and through it would enter the Care-taker, carrying the big Bible as solemnly as if it had been the Ark of the Covenant, and after depositing it on the pulpit desk with all the regulated pomp and decorum of a court-usher, he would withdraw again, to be followed almost immediately by the Minister himself who ascended the stairs with figure erect enough, indeed, but head bent at that nice angle between humility and sanctity which met with most acceptance from the congregation. After a formal glance around the building to see that all was well, he would at once proceed to open the service by announcing and reading out the Psalm; whereupon the 'Precentor,' as he was called, who sat in a little box at the base of the pulpit, and whom we boys regarded as second only in importance to the minister himself, would strike his tuning-fork against the edge of the desk, and quickly running up the gamut in an under-hum until he reached the note required, would lead off the singing. An interval followed in which the precentor's voice alone was heard, but the congregation presently joined in, and in a few moments the sound rose in great volume from hundreds of harsh and untuned throats, and rolled full against the concave roof. Many of the congregation, you noticed, lingered on the notes with a kind of desperate affection as if they could not let them go, but falling far into the rear and threatening to be left behind, they had to be brought up to time again by an emphatic jerk of the psalm-book which the precentor held in

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his hands and which he used as a conducting rod. Now I know not how others were affected by all this, although by their appearance they seemed to enjoy it, but as for myself I can truly say the higher and louder the volume swelled the lower did my spirits fall. No funeral march in the long procession of the dead, no eclipse of the sun at noonday, no moaning of the winter's wind, or wail of howling dogs in the night watches ever in after years let down my soul to a pitch so low as did these dreary melancholy psalms rising and falling in their harsh and sullen monotony like the moan of some distant midnight sea against a deserted shore; and to this hour whenever I hear them, they produce the same dreary and depressing effect on my mind. Nothing indeed could better express than these psalm tunes, the genius and spirit of the institutions and creeds out of which they arose. The first two lines (written generally with an abundance of flats or in a minor key), bare and harsh as the soul of Calvinism itself, and which were always associated in my mind with the cries of damned spirits or the groans of hunted covenanters lifting their voices to God for mercy, sufficiently expressed the prevailing feeling of abasement and contrition; when, having touched the lowest depths of all, in the third line, again, the notes would rise in reaction in swelling strains of exultation and triumph, until in the last line they died away into the old wail of stricken humiliation. The names of one or two of the more obnoxious of these old psalm tunes still abide in my memory, one especially, called 'Coleshill,' which was dolefully wailed and chanted, like the tom-tom in some Indian exorcism, when sacrament was being administered, being my peculiar bane; and to this day I cannot hear them without the old feeling of dreariness and pain.

After a prayer which for sheer length distanced all subsequent parallels in my experience, the Minister, thawed in utterance and full of zeal, would at once set out on the main feat and business of the day, which was nothing less than the

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delivery of two sermons in succession with little or no interval between them! He was a North of Ireland man, of medium stature, well-built, thick-set, and in the prime of life, with a short-cut, brown, stubby beard, coarse, thick and wiry, and wearing his dark hair double-parted on the sides so that the combined intervening locks, gathered and brought to a ridge at the top, curled and broke to the one side like the crest of a falling wave. A good man I verily believe, and true as steel to his convictions, and in private life amiable, gentle, and honourable to a degree—I still remember with gratitude and affection his kindly words when he met and spoke to me in the street—but in public and at the only angle at which I was accustomed to see him, he was stiff, unbending, and unconciliatory. His voice was rough, harsh, and without compass or melody, and his delivery, unlike that of his southern countrymen, was constrained and jerky, and without fluency, facility or grace. The pulpit style which he most affected was that of the cold, argumentative, and severely logical theologian rather than the persuasive winner of souls, but when warmed into passion by the presence in his path of some invisible foe—Catholic or Arminian—instead of sawing the air or beating the pulpit with his fist, as was the manner of some of his professional brethren, he would clap his arms tightly to his side, and fall on his antagonists in a series of short energetic jerks of the shoulder, each jerk an argument, much in the manner of the principal performer in a Punch and Judy show. As for the text and ostensible *motif* of his sermon it mattered little; he would start anywhere, ranging freely and without apparent preference through all parts of the Old and New Testament, but after a formal and merely complimentary glance at the context and environment of his subject, he would be swiftly drawn into the vortex of Calvinistic Theology and carried along its rocky bed to its predestined end. No word of general human interest, nor hint of any personal experience of his own or another's, no lively anecdote such as those with which the

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street-preacher interests or animates his hearers, warmed these, to me, dreary discourses, so far as I can remember, during all those years; indeed all such trivial personal matter he would have regarded as beneath the dignity and solemnity of his high theme; but the soul and centre of every discourse, the hinge on which all turned was what he called the 'Scheme of Salvation;' a high and logical structure erected with vast labour and expenditure of thought, and supported on two massive pillars, the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, beneath whose cold and lofty arches, indeed, the multiform concrete sins and temptations of poor erring men and women might have walked in and out unheeded. Occasionally, but at rare intervals only, some great name or incident from profane history, giving promise of a story, would lift its head in the midst of his discourse—the name of Byron I remember was once mentioned —and then all ears were pricked to hear what the upshot and *dénoûment* would be, but we were speedily disabused, for instead of carrying the incident to its natural conclusion, he would summarily cut it short at the point where it began to be interesting, leaving us with only that smallest section of it which fitted into his theological design; and the seductive personality after turning up its shining side for a moment, would be swiftly drawn down into the theological maelstrom again, never to emerge.

The congregation, meanwhile, who had sat erect and attentive, and to many of whom a theological dissertation was as fascinating as a tale of fiction, even they would at last begin to show signs of flagging, and here and there a head accustomed to the open air of the fields and oppressed by the sultry heat, would be seen to fall back softly in slumber against the back of the pew, until as it receded back farther and farther and the jaw in consequence dropped lower and lower, a sharp harsh snore, cut short in the middle, would arrest the attention of the drowsy worshipper and startle him into propriety again. My mother who held out heroically against the combined effects of the heat and the

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discourse, nerved to it alike by duty and piety, maintained a fixed and rigid attention throughout, and, except when disturbed by some fresh vagary of mine, accompanied the words of the preacher by a mute movement of her lips as if there were magic in the sound. But in spite of the efforts I made to sit still, the feeling of restlessness and *ennui* became at last so intolerable that I would begin to yawn and fidget, scratching the Bible or the seat with pins, scraping with my feet, or worse than all committing that prime offence against decorum, the rolling of my head from side to side on the desk in front of me; when my mother, who all the while sat calm and motionless but secretly keeping her eye on me, becoming inwardly more and more exasperated by the attention I was drawing on myself, would, without word of warning or other trace of visible emotion, reach out her hand beneath the desk and fall on my leg or ribs with such precipitation as to bring me swiftly to the perpendicular again; her face the while remaining unruffled as before! So constant, indeed, did these reminders become, and with such unfailing punctuality were they administered, that I had long ceased to resent or even to question them, and they finally took their place in my experience as one more only of the many trials and afflictions which on that day I had to endure. And all the while the monotonous roll of dialectic and exposition proceeded, 'predestination,' 'original sin,' 'the potter and the wheel,' the 'Church militant and triumphant,' and other such phrases ever and again falling on the ear as they wheeled in and out round the central theme of which they were the abutments and outlying logical appendages; until the arena at last being cleared of all heresies and unsoundnesses, and the minister having laid all the antagonists that rose in his path, the entire Scheme of Salvation, perfect and complete in all its parts, stood clear and unassailable before us. A few words of 'application,' as the minister phrased it, invariably followed, in which the whole artillery of penalty which had never been entirely absent, but whose low rumble you heard in the distance, and whose fire you

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saw breaking dull and fuliginous through the various openings of the discourse, was concentrated and drawn up at the back of the unbeliever, in the hope that should the logic of the preacher fail, the sinner might by this show of force be persuaded to enter the fold. With this the sermon closed, but only to be succeeded, as I have said, by a second, which, starting it is true from a different text, after a pass or two was drawn into the same old vortex, and revolved around the same old theme; until at the end of a prolonged sitting of two hours and a half, the congregation, worn out by weariness and hunger, were at last dismissed with the benediction to their homes.

Such is a faithful account of the service in which I was immersed Sunday after Sunday for many years, but it was only on reaching home that the real effect of it all on my mother began fully to manifest itself. On her simple nature the sermon, with all the theological impedimenta it carried along with it, instead of relieving seems only to have added to her mental perplexity; and accentuating as it did the contrast between that doctrine of works in which she at bottom secretly believed and trusted, and the fixed and iron predestination on which the preacher insisted, it seemed to act only as a source of pure irritation; chastising rather than cheering and consoling her, and instead of allaying the injured feeling of the morning, converting it into a sullen moroseness. The fixed expression of her face, and the irritable look about the eye, as well as the peculiar silence that came over her as we walked slowly home, were a sufficient indication to me of her state of feeling, and warned me of what, if I were not careful, I had to expect. Nor was I mistaken, for the slightest levity, noise, or approach to a worldly remark on the part either of myself or my sister, was sufficient to ignite her, and brought down on us such a whirlwind of pent-up wrath, such a raking up of all our past misdeeds, ungodlinesses and sins, that we were glad to keep out of the way for a time.

In the afternoon the same gloom and monotony fell over

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everything within and without the house as in the morning. My mother sat usually in the recess of the window, reading through her spectacles a chapter of the Bible or some religious tract, my sister engaged in like manner sat listlessly apart, separated from me both in feeling and in sympathy; and in the corner of the room the old-fashioned clock, inaudible in the din of the week-day, ticked out loud and oppressive in the silence. Forbidden to go out of doors I would steal quietly out into the back garden among the trees, and there, too, all was silent in the drowsy heat except the chirping of the crickets in the grass. Peering through between the fence rails into the street, all was silent and deserted, and no playfellow was anywhere to be seen, except, perhaps, at some distant window reading or listlessly making figures with his fingers on the panes. The roll of existence seemed to have ceased; and in spite of the fierce glare of the sun and the blue sky of the afternoon, a feeling would often come over me, I can still remember, as if I were lost in the woods; while the melancholy sound of the Sunday-school bell broke in on the silence as if tolling the knell of some departing soul. Returning again to the garden, and lying down on the grass in the shade of the apple trees in a dull and listless reverie, there would come to me from some distant cottage the melancholy moan of one or other of the same old psalm tunes of the morning; and as the sound came wafted to me intermittently on the wind across the intervening distance, it struck in on the heart like the wailing of confined and restless spirits.

After tea the atmosphere of the house usually cleared somewhat and seemed less closely invested with gloom; it seemed in the interval to have mellowed imperceptibly and to be as the difference between an evening and a morning twilight; the back of the day seemed to have been broken, and its stern genius to be dissolving; and my mother's thoughts, if one could judge by her air and expression, to be turning to the morning and the ordinary work of the world again.

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CHAPTER V.

OUR NEIGHBOURS.

IN these early years there came to the village, to fill some small office in the Customs, an old English officer who took up his residence in the large stone house adjoining our own, and there in a genteel kind of way with his wife and daughters, strove to maintain some outward appearance of his former state. This 'old Captain,' as we called him, was an aristocratic looking man with silvered locks, but now fast getting stooped and tottery, and although simple and genial in his manners, had a temper of great irascibility and was, after the manner of the 'old school' to which he belonged, much given to profane swearing. At almost any time of the day you might hear his oaths sputtering off like fireworks here and there in and about the garden and the street; but it was only at night when his own dogs or his neighbours cats disturbed his rest, that he reached his full range and compass. On these occasions he would appear in loose *déshabille* on the balcony, and would storm up and down it regardless of all human presence, his full round oaths booming and resounding like minute guns in the peaceful silence of the evening, and borne on the night winds far and wide. He was much addicted to wine and wassail, too, as his blood-red face sufficiently attested, and although of strict honour according to the code accepted in military circles, report went that he was deeply in debt;

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and while in the eye of his neighbours maintaining a high standard of luxury, living sumptuously and carousing freely, was said to be indifferent alike to the importunities, the clamours, and the threats of his creditors. His sons were already grown up, and only occasionally to be seen at home; but his daughters!—I can see them still in their haughty grace and gossamer-like beauty, as gliding from the verandah into the street they swept athwart the line of sight, with their long trains flowing softly behind them, their proud necks curved like swans, and their feet but seeming to kiss the glowing pavement o'er which they passed; while I watched them from our doorstep in the distance, with an idolatry which in its purity and devotion the Seraphim themselves might not have despised. To pay court to these beautiful daughters, a number of young officers were in the habit of coming to the village on Saturday nights in the summer months; and on Sunday afternoons after luncheon were to be seen sitting in the shade of the open verandah, the old Captain himself in the midst of them, smoking, drinking and guffawing loudly, like a party of dissolute Cavaliers among their Puritan surroundings.

Now the effect of this on my mother was peculiar. She had always held fast to the Bible as her sure defence and hope as she groped her way through the vast unillumined night by which she was encompassed; keeping its sacred lamp perennially burning in her heart, to fright away the night-spectres that glared in on her from the darkness; much in the same way as in her early days in Canada she had kept alive her hearth-fire, to fright away the hungry wolves that prowled around her little cabin in the wood, 'fearsome creatures' as she called them; and whose eyeballs blazing like burning stars encountered hers as she peered out wistfully into the night. To this Bible or Divine Word she clung tenaciously as to a sacred ark; accepting it not critically and as distinguishing between kernel and husk, essence and accident, or such like refinements of later days, but traditionally and in the lump, in

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a spirit of pure and simple belief, as one single divine dispensation and deposit—one single and entire whole, which with her embraced not only Sunday and Kirk, but minister, precentor, elders, Church-members and all; even the care-taker being invested in her eyes, on Sundays at least, with a certain distinct and peculiar odour of sanctity.

With these simple ideas as her beacon lights, it is evident that the particular vices of the old Captain—his profanity, sumptuosity, debt, and above all his Sunday desecration—could not have been indifferent to her; and yet to my surprise, although fully cognizant of them, she seemed disposed to pass them over without that freedom of comment which in a like case she would have permitted herself with her other neighbours. But to me, always on the look-out for a precedent with which to justify my own Sunday backslidings, this conduct of the Captain came as a kind of godsend; and I at once seized on it as a weapon wherewith to extract from my mother some mitigation of the severe penance to which I was subjected. I flattered myself I had got her in a dilemma from which there was no escaping, and that she must either condemn the Captain outright, or grant me that relaxation of my Sunday discipline on which my mind was really bent. In this, however, I was mistaken; for on citing in my own justification the example of the old Captain and his train of young Cavaliers, she eluded and outflanked me by a movement which in its simplicity was as effective as if it had been the result of the most strategic combination;—by declaring, viz, that the cases were not at all parallel, and that what was done by military folk was no rule at all for me. She seemed to regard them as a different order of beings, whose movements were not to be measured by the same moral categories as the ordinary human creature; and conduct which she would have freely reprobated in her humbler neighbours, she was disposed to allow to them as natural and a thing of course; much as one might allow a plurality of wives to a Mahommedan or Mormon. The truth

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was, she still retained in her simple way the traditions she had brought with her from her native land; the old associations of the license allowed to the military, lying side by side in her mind with the antagonistic code of ordinary morality, not only without offence, but like those old cats and dogs which have been brought up in the same family, even with a kind of affection. On me however all this fell like a new revelation. Born and brought up in a roaring democracy that had levelled all distinctions to the ground, it was the first hint I had given me that there did anywhere exist in this world human beings who fell under special categories of moral judgment. And although this, the first footprint of the Old World that I had seen left on the sands of the New, was soon washed away by the in-rolling tide of democracy that beat high against every shore of thought and action, still for the time being it utterly mixed and confounded my ideas of right and wrong, and made an indelible impression on my mind. Still, spite of this Old World tradition of my mother's, against which I found it hopeless to argue, I continued to fall back on the precedent of the old Captain whenever my Sunday escapades brought down on me the censure of the other neighbours.

These neighbours were a peculiar and miscellaneous assortment of various shades and qualities, but all, like Carlyle's pitcher of tame vipers, striving to get their heads above one another; and all, in consequence, with eyes armed like needles for the pricking and detection of each other's transgressions. Among those of them whom I remember most vividly, were a pair of old widowed sisters of great sanctimoniousness and piety, who lived in one of the houses in the rear of our own. At the windows of the upper story of this house, these old ladies were to be seen at all hours of the day, sitting sewing with one eye on their needle and the other on the street; nothing that passed below escaping their censorious vigilance; especially if it in any way ministered to that secret love of scandal which in spite of their piety was their chiefest pleasure.

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Next door to them again lived the old woman whose cow had wrought such depredation in our cabbage garden, and between whom and the beast my mother had discovered such strange psychological affinities. When we boys were playing in the evenings in front of her house, she, ever vigilant, would emerge from the gate and range up and down the pavement alongside of us to keep us in awe; her arms akimbo and her thick neck set like an angry bull, sniffing the air for any commotion that might arise among us in which her own boys were involved, and in which she might intervene. Across the way from us again, lived in easy circumstances an American family of Dutch descent whose boys, clumsy, ungainly, and of coarse and overgrown fibre, were much given to a rough kind of horse-play, and whose backwardness at school had earned for them the opprobrious appellation of dunces. The mother, a woman of delicate faded American mould, rarely appeared outside the walls of her home, but sat for the most part in her own room posing in her various hypochondrias as the graceful invalid, and raying out at times in her slow-drawling way many curious and pregnant sarcasms on her neighbours and the world around her. Behind and beyond them lived a number of Methodists of the English Puritan type, simple in their lives and habits and much given to revivals in religion; besides some negro families; while here and there among the rest lived people of drunken, worthless, and disreputable lives, who were shunned by their respectable neighbours, and with whom little or no intercourse was possible.

With most of these neighbours my love of mischief and absence of Puritanic affinities had made my relations somewhat strained, but with the old Captain it was different. With his old-fashioned code of honour he looked on the strait-laced morality of his neighbours with good-humoured contempt; and the various escapades and general paganism which so offended them in me, belonged precisely to the class of faults to which he was most indifferent. My school reputation, on the other

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hand, which had somehow reached him, filled the good old man with enthusiastic admiration; he nicknamed me 'the Doctor,' and when he met me in the street on the way to or from school and had had just sufficient wine to mellow him and soften the edge of his irritability, he would stop me, his red face overflowing with kindness, and in his characteristic, abrupt, way open on me with 'By G—, Doctor, they tell me you're a devilish clever fellow, what are you going in for, my boy? The Army, the Bar, the Church? Eh?' To which, I replying that I did not know, he would cheerily pat me on the shoulder in parting, and with a phrase that had become quite a formula, so often would he repeat it, say, 'Stick to your books my lad, and you will become Attorney-General of Canada some day!' though why specially this particular position in the official hierarchy I have never been able to divine.

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CHAPTER VI.

PAINS AND PLEASURES.

THE long stretches of time which sometimes intervened between our games and sports, especially in the summer vacation, were passed by us boys in the promiscuous life of the streets, and were spent chiefly in the endeavour to gratify those cravings of the senses and imagination, of the eye and the appetite, which are ever the most exorbitant with boys, but which were for me especially difficult of realization. Huge cakes of rock-candy, butter-scotch, or toffy might be sunning themselves in the little sweet-shop windows, protected from the predatory swarms of flies by old pieces of faded yellow gauze; baskets of peaches, plums, and strawberries might be exposed in the open street; clowns might jest, wild beasts roar, and fairy muslined acrobats witch the eye with wondrous horsemanship behind the thin wall of circus-canvas; but from all this, for want of the necessary money, I was inexorably shut out, and by a ring as impassable as ever was castle-moat across which lover sighed. Most of my playfellows could command from their parents the occasional penny for sweetmeats and other delicacies, or even the sixpence which would admit them to the wonders of the menagerie or circus, and in the matter of fruits and sweets, which could be divided, I remember with pleasure the generosity with which they usually shared them with those of us less fortunate than themselves. But it was

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not the same thing as having a penny of one's own; you still felt yourself a pensioner, without power of individual initiative or choice; and that royal prerogative of exercising absolute sovereignty on one's own account which boys so much love, was wanting to our perfect felicity. Many, in consequence, were the entreaties and strong and steady the pressure which I brought to bear on my mother, for a penny of my own to do as I liked with, but all in vain. Not the most vigorous and sustained importunity, or the most plausible and insidious appeals, could move her from her fastness. At the very mention of money her parsimony took fright, and the imaginative horror she felt lest by concession she should establish a precedent for the future, was sufficient to shut her purse against all appeals. To baffle me she was equal to any expedient, but for the most part entrenched herself within a ring of stock phrases which she turned towards every point and angle of attack. If I wanted the money for sweets—they were ruinous to the teeth; if for fruit—it would give me cholera or colic; and as for the menagerie and circus,—the very devil himself was in them, and there was pollution in the very sound!

Most of my play-fellows, as I have said, could command the occasional penny necessary to keep life and imagination sweet and active, but there were always a few who like myself seemed condemned to a perpetual penury; and many in consequence were the expedients to which we had recourse, and vast the designs we entertained to raise the wind; but all with inadequate result. One old Irishman—'old Paddy'—who kept a coal-yard near the station, had recently announced to the public by the usual sign-boards, that he was prepared to pay in cash for all kinds of old iron, brass, copper, and the like, at so much a pound respectively. Now although it took a considerable time to collect as much old iron as would sell for a penny, and old brass or copper were only occasional finds, still in the absence of any other mode of obtaining the toffy and rock-

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candy for which we so longed, we were glad to avail ourselves of this; and entered on the search for these articles with characteristic energy and thoroughness. Laying out the village in sections, I remember, we ransacked every nook and corner of it—scouring the railway track for old iron spikes, searching the bed of the river beneath the bridge when the water was low, overhauling the old rubbish heaps that lay on the commons or at the backs of fences, and even overleaping the fences themselves and trespassing on the gardens of private householders. No vultures could more surely find their way by some mysterious instinct to the decaying carcass, or colony of white ants to the dead branches of fallen trees, than we to the most hidden object of our desire. Nothing escaped us. Was an old pot or brass candlestick buried beneath some dust-heap? Sooner or later it must yield itself up. Was an old tea-kettle lying anywhere about neglected in the nooks or corners of some back garden? It would be speedily noted, and presently you would see one of us boys, then another, and then a third, mount to the top of the fence, and after sitting there a few moments in solemn conclave, like rooks on a tree, surveying the field around, one of us would swoop down on it, and climbing over the fence with it without more ado, would consign it to the common receptacle. Private property as such we always treated in these raids with punctilious respect, but any neglect on the part of a householder to make the dividing line between *meum* and *tuum* sufficiently clear and distinct, was the signal for our taking the object into our own hands without apology or remark. So long, for example, as a pewter pot, say, stood erect on its own basis on a garden seat near the house, scoured and cleaned as if it were carefully looked after, it was safe, and had nothing to fear from us; and the rights of its owner were in all cases religiously observed; but should it be found in an outlying part of the garden all battered in and bespattered, or have rolled over on its side in the grass, or lain down in the mud and become embedded there as if it intended

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to remain, or in any other way given sign of desertion or neglect, we had no hesitation in taking it under our wing and protection, and placing it in safe custody in the common bag with the rest.

But as copper or brass were rare and uncertain finds, and as it took days or perhaps weeks scavenging for old iron to make a few pence, great was our exultation when we heard from one of the boys, that a gentleman living in the village was prepared to buy the hind legs of frogs at the rate of a shilling a dozen. Rumours, indeed, had for some time been floating about among us boys, to the effect that some of the more wealthy epicures were in the habit of resorting under cover of night to one of the saloons or refreshment rooms off the main street, and there secretly regaling themselves on a dish which though evidently regarded by them as a delicacy, struck us with as much horror and disgust as the rat-eating legends reported of the Chinese. Still, as the frogs could be had by the hundred at any time from the pond that lay by the side of the railway-line on our way to school, these rumours always excited a certain amount of interest in us boys, an interest which died away again, however, when no sufficient authority could be found for them. But when word was brought us which by its definiteness lent colour to these rumours, such a Golconda was opened up in our dreams, as we had not before known. The gentleman in question, who was to purchase the frogs, was a well-known barrister of local repute, who lived in high and sumptuous state in a spacious mansion situated on the brow of the hill. He was a man of enormous, even portentous bulk, and so overgrown with fat, that at the time of his death, as I was credibly informed, it stood out on his ribs in solid mass to the depth of some four-and-a-half inches. As he moved along he puffed and panted from this excess of fat like an enormous porpoise; and when on his way to his office he entered that side of the bridge set apart for foot-passengers, pushing his great circumference before him through the narrow straits, and larding its railings with his distended

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sides, he filled the whole available space to the exclusion of the other occupants of the bridge, who were obliged to stand aside till he passed. Like many men of this type, although essentially generous and kind-hearted, he was bombastic and domineering in temper, with much Falstaffian bluster and blasphemy which he took no pains to suppress; and when put out, which he affected easily to be, roared and stormed like an angry sea. Even in ordinary conversation he spoke in tones so loud that you were apprized of his approach long before he came in sight, and could hear every word distinctly at a distance of some hundreds of paces. As he came along puffing and blowing as I have described, he would stare through his spectacles at every object or person he met, as if to say 'well what business have you here?' his face puckered into a peculiar grin from the retraction of the upper lip, and disclosing a row of teeth of such length, size, and aggressiveness, that in the mounting sun of the morning they shone in the distance as he approached, like burnished ivory. When close to him you saw that he was a man who was especially well-kept; not only his immaculate white shirt and waistcoat, but the very brush of his grey whiskers, the clean-shaven softness of the skin, as well as the polished enamel of the teeth (less common at that time than now), all gave the impression of a man to whom the finer delicacies of the palate were as essential as its grosser delights. It was doubtless due to the impression left unconsciously on us boys by his personal appearance, that when the report once took shape that he was a frog-eater, so great seemed its inherent probability, that although purely apocryphal as it afterwards proved, it only required to be stated to command at once and without further evidence our unhesitating and unqualified assent;—and we went to bed that night on the strength of it with our heads full of the happiest dreams. Next morning we rose early and went to the frog-pond, making up our minds on the way to catch only a dozen at first by way of experiment. The frogs lay sunning themselves by the score on the green

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banks of the pond, or on the old fallen trunks of trees that lay athwart it in every direction, and on our approach leapt into it one after another, with a flop as they went under, like the drawing of reluctant corks. We soon caught a dozen without much difficulty, and after cutting off their hind legs, skinning them, and placing them in a pail of pure spring water from the fountain, we started off to catch the old lawyer about the time he arrived at his office. On our way it was voted by the other boys, that I should be the one to take in the frogs and transact the sale. Now although equal to any ordinary enterprise of devilment or audacity, I was always morbidly shy in the presence of others, especially of strangers, and had a preternatural horror of doing or saying anything foolish or unusual that would expose me to ridicule or rebuff. This feeling which was due, so far as I can analyze, to an unfortunate combination of pride and sensitiveness, went so far as to make it a matter of the greatest difficulty for me to ask the simplest question of a stranger in the street, or to enter a shop for anything at all out of the way or of the exact technical name of which I was ignorant; and all for fear of calling forth some snub or sneer on the face of the person addressed, which I could not take up, and which I knew would cause me much mortification. A direct insult I could always directly challenge by counter insolence or defiance, but those slight and peculiar changes of expression which mark the finer shades of derision or scorn, but which at the same time are so subtle and unsubstantial that they can neither be challenged nor ignored,—these I never could face. To imagine, therefore, that I should walk calmly into that lawyer's office in the face of all his clerks, with a pail in my hand, and that pail containing, too, above all things frogs' hind legs dressed and skinned! When I figured it to myself, and thought of all the latent quips and gibes which it might draw forth at my expense in case we should have been mistaken,—no money would have tempted me. As the other boys, however, did not seem to feel any hesitation on that score—

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a state of mind which I have always looked on with envy and admiration—one of them on my refusing, took the pail from my hand and started across the street with it to the office door, while the rest of us sat down in the shade of the fence opposite, to await the issue so big with fortune to ourselves. What our surprise and disgust were, therefore, what our descent from our golden cloud-land, when the boy as suddenly emerged, looking disappointed, crestfallen, and partly frightened; and what our laughter afterwards when we learned from him that on offering the frogs the old lawyer looked at him, then stared, then in horror roared at him, rising and threatening to stick his head in the pail;—all this may best be left to the imagination of the reader. Suffice it to say that when we got round the first corner, where we could not be seen, we incontinently flung the contents of the pail into the first gutter, and fallen from the empyrean, betook ourselves to the common highway again.

When all other resources failed and not a penny could be raised among the whole troop of us, we would fall back upon our aboriginal instincts, and scouring the country round would fall on the apple-trees in the farmers' orchards, or gather the raspberries that grew wild along the railway track or on the margin of the woods; at the same time keeping our eye on whatever godsend chance might throw in our way in the town itself. One of the happiest of these chance prizes, and one which could be calculated on with a certain periodicity, was the occasional sugar hogshead which after being emptied by the grocer of its contents, would be thrown out into the open yard that lay at the back of the shops lining the main street. One or other of the boys was always on the watch in the capacity of informal scout, to give notice to the rest of us when a fresh hogshead appeared in the yard; and when he chanced to come on one, after helping himself liberally first, he would come running to the mill-pond where we were most likely bathing, and shouting out 'A sugar-barrel, boys!' would throw us into a state of excitement and exaltation as great as

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the unexpected announcement by our teacher of a school-treat or holiday. Out of the water we would rush in hot haste, and making for the place where our clothes lay, would hurriedly fling on our shirt and trousers, and snatching the rest up under our arms in the fear of being left behind, would start off in the direction of our guide; dressing as we went along. On we went in a scattered line like a train of eager camp-followers, picking our way with our bare feet among the stones and dead tree-roots that rose above the level of the ground, our guide in front, and the slower among us bringing up the rear in a kind of easy trot; onward and over the mill-race and around by the mill, to the entrance of the lane, and down the lane itself to the particular place where our prize lay.

In a few minutes from the first summons we would all be on the spot, and on entering the yard, there, sure enough, would be seen the huge hogshead lying rolled on its side with its mouth fronting us like the entrance to a tunnel, and a floor on which, to our young imaginations, whole armies might have encamped! On our approaching it, great clouds of flies would rise from it in buzzing swarms, darkening the air and filling the whole yard as they dispersed with their drowsy sweetness. Into the hogshead without further ado we would rush pell-mell, without rank, order, or precedence, crowding in on one another until the floor was packed; the last comers waiting outside for their turn, or impatiently reaching inwards for such of its contents as they could secure from the outside. The golden sugar still lay soft and luscious in the cracks and seams formed by the imperfect junction of the staves on its huge circumference, or where the sides made angle with the bottom; and at once we would set to work on it like a gang of labourers on a building, picking out the rich seams of sugar from the over-arching roof and sides with our pocket-knives, or failing these, with bits of stick or shingle which we had picked up on the way, and had wiped on our coat sleeves as we came along. And there we would sit, eating until we were gorged and could

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go on no longer, each one as he emerged filled, making room for those who were waiting their turn outside, until all at last were satisfied; what remained in the hogshead being left for the flies, or the next troop of boys that chanced to pass along.

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CHAPTER VII.

A RHUBARB TART.

THE pains with which the penury of my boyhood had so dashed and intermingled its otherwise buoyant pleasures, were doubly aggravated by that constitutional sensitiveness to which I have just referred, and which an unhallowed combination of shyness and pride seems to have fixed deeply in the roots of my nature. For some months in the course of one summer, I was in the habit of attending with my mother's sanction, and as a welcome relief from the prison limits of our garden, a Sunday-school which had recently been opened in connection with one of the Methodist denominations of the village. One of the leading men in the school, and a main pillar of the chapel to which it was attached, was a Cornish immigrant who in the early days of the settlement had taken up a portion of the primitive forest, and by dint of hard labour had at the time of which I am writing, transformed it into a rich and beautiful farm. Wishing to give us children a treat, he had arranged for a pic-nic to be held in one of the little clumps of wood that still lay scattered here and there in primitive wildness among his rich and waving cornfields. It was arranged that we should each bring with us our own provisions—pies, tarts, jams, and the like—and these after being brought to the chapel, were to be thrown promiscuously into a common stock, of which all alike should partake. My mother who had at first looked askance at the

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matter, had at last after some importunity consented to have something prepared as my share in the general contribution; and accordingly on my returning from school at noon on the day of the pic-nic, and asking her for it, she pointed with an air of indifference to an object which lay on the far corner of the table behind me, and which had escaped my notice on my first entrance. It was a little rhubarb tart, which had been baked in a coarse, blue, stone dish, and which wore on its wizened, pinched, and wrinkled crust (in spite of being newly baked) that look of age and poverty which could only have come from the absence in its composition of any elements more generous than flour and water. Through a hole or gash in the centre of this crust, a thin acrid-looking juice exuded, which coloured the parts around, and still further heightened the disagreeable impression left by its general appearance; and at sight of it my spirits fell. I was ashamed of it, and began loudly to protest that a thing so pinched and miserable, so sour and acrid-looking that pounds of sugar would be lost on it, was not fit to be seen at a respectable pic-nic, and that I would have nothing to do with it, To all of which my mother merely replied calmly, 'If you don't like it you can leave it; it will do well enough.' As there was no alternative, therefore, but either to take it or deprive myself of a treat to which I had been looking forward with much pleasure, I was obliged to make the best of it; and wrapping it up in a cloth the better to conceal it, I started off with it at once to the chapel, in the hope that if I could get there before the rest arrived, I might deposit it among the other provisions without anyone knowing it was mine; my mother charging me strictly as I left the house, to be sure and bring back the little blue dish with me on my return. Arrived at the chapel I found the door ajar, and walking in quietly, looked nervously about me to see where I was to put my contribution down. Within, all was silent and empty, no human being was anywhere to be seen; but crowded on a side-table beneath one of the windows, lay the entire stock of provisions which had been brought there in the morning.

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They were of every description and variety—immense pies with their rich and yellow crusts puffed and raised into high embossed mounds; open tarts with their edges beautifully crimped, and covered with thick layers of jam or pumpkin, across which fine strips of pastry ran as ornament; cakes so light and brittle that they seemed as if they would crumble at a touch; pots of jelly and jam;—and all giving off the most sweet and appetizing odour. At the sight of this unexpected magnificence, my heart sank still lower within me, and taking the little tart out of the cloth in a state of nervous trepidation, I deposited it as quickly as I could among the rest, and hastened back to the door; and once well outside again I inwardly resolved that I should disown that tart if challenged!

Presently the party arrived; the boys and girls marshalled by the teachers soon fell into line, and marched merrily along the streets to the outskirts of the village; then onward and along by the side of the dusky pine woods to the gate of the farm itself; the wagon containing the provisions bringing up the rear amid clouds of dust. As we passed through the gate, the green fields of the farm opened before us in all their summer beauty, stretching downwards along a gentle declivity to the margin of the flat belt of wood where the pic-nic was to be held. Arrived on the spot we dispersed in groups and parties, and scampered off here and there in all directions through the wood; now playing hide and seek or throwing sticks at the acorns and beech nuts; now chasing the squirrels from tree to tree; or again joining with the girls in the excitement of 'kiss in the ring' and other games. The older people meanwhile were busy spreading the table-cloth in a shady open space in the middle of the wood, disposing the provisions around it with impartiality on all sides, but with an eye as well to picturesqueness and beauty of effect.

Now although entering into the games that were going on, with the utmost zest, and even entirely forgetting myself in them for the time being, still ever and again I would be troubled

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about my little tart, and whenever I had an opportunity would keep secretly returning to the spot where the table was being laid, circling round it apparently only in play, but really drawn to it by a fascination as irresistible as if it had been the scene of some crime. The greater part of the provisions had already been set out on the table, but so far as I could see from the single passing eye-glance I dare give them, the little tart had not yet made its appearance; and I can still remember the feeling of shame and mortification that seized me, as the conviction flashed on my mind, that to these people as to myself the first sight of it had been enough, and that they had prudently decided to leave it in veiled seclusion in the background. In this, however, I was mistaken, for on the next stealthy circuit I made around the spot, it was with a feeling of real relief that I saw that they had at last brought it forward, although relegating it to an inconspicuous position on the flank near the bottom of the table.

Presently all was ready, and at a word from our host we drew in on all sides from our games to the table, but we had hardly sat down before a second fear more absorbing than the first, and one too which all along had been present in the background of my mind, took possession of me;—the fear namely, that now that the tart was in visible presence, it would to a certainty attract attention to itself, and be made the butt for the wit and gibes of the other boys. In order to be out of the range of any shots of this kind that might be discharged at it, and which had they reached my ears, I knew from my habit of blushing on all occasions, would have put me to open shame, I had instinctively taken my seat at the opposite end of the table; and while trying to disarm suspicion by an affected gaiety, still kept my eye furtively on the tart, which sat there it seemed to me among its more august neighbours like a poor relation in the society of purse-proud friends! Around it on all sides the battle raged; hands thrust out, met and crossed one another in their efforts to reach this or the other pampered

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delicacy that lay around it; vast pies were cut up, helped out and passed round, until they had all melted away and disappeared; but still the little tart sat there on the spotless damask like a faded wall-flower, in cold neglect! Had the milky-blue dish, the aged and withered look, and the thin and acrid juice that distilled and bubbled through its wrinkled crust, stayed the hands of all who saw it? I, at least, had no doubt of it, and the thought made me hot within, and added a new pang to my mortification. Whether it were being made the butt for the young wit, whether any or what shafts and gibes were being levelled at it, I could not tell; as I could not hear or distinguish clearly what passed, amid the din and merriment that went on around the table; but so acute were my suspicions, that when I had for the moment forgotten it, lost in the pleasure of some dainty morsel on my own plate, any sudden outbreak of laughter coming to me from the other side of the table, would turn me hot with fear and shame; and I would raise my eyes, scared and furtive like another Macbeth, in full expectation that now at last the ghost which had so haunted me, would rise and confront me. But as the alarm was apparently false, and nothing definite could be seen or heard, I was soon lost in the pleasures of the feast again; and felt a kind of pseudo-relief in the thought that at any rate I was too far off for their gibes to reach me or those around me. Then I would have a reaction of feeling, in which I would comfort myself with the assurance that I had so secretly deposited the tart in the chapel, that no one could possibly know it was mine, as well as with the reiterated determination that if the worst came to the worst I would disown it; when in the midst of these heroic resolves another gust of laughter would reach my ears, and startle me into shame and mortification as before. In this alternation between the solid enjoyment of the provisions on the one hand, and the shame, fear, and mortification (spite of an affected gaiety and nonchalance) on the other, the afternoon wore itself away and the meal at last came to an

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end; and the little tart which in my preternatural sensitiveness I had so ignobly forsaken and disowned, was carried away with the rest of the fragments to another part of the wood. There on the rising ground at the foot of a great elm tree I saw it for the last time, resting on the crumpled table-cloth, with a group of people around it claiming and sorting out from the general *débris* the plates and dishes belonging to them. But now more than ever it behoved me not to approach it, knowing well, as I did, that when its ownership was asked for, my face would be sure to betray me, and feeling that having escaped so far I must now be doubly careful to keep out of the way. I gave it therefore a still wider berth than before, and making pretence of amusing myself by looking for squirrels among the distant trees, waited until the sorting of dishes was over and the hour for our return home had arrived. As for the little dish which my mother had so strictly charged me to bring back with me, I had long ago determined to leave it to its fate, for although knowing what I had to expect if I returned without it, I would as soon have claimed relationship with the Prince of Darkness himself as with it! At last we all started for home, the farmer and his wife accompanying us to the gate, and it was not until I was well out on the highway, and there was no longer any chance of my tart being identified or my fears realized, that I recovered my usual light-heartedness and gaiety again; and so brought to its close a day which with so many normal elements of pleasure in it, had through pure sensitiveness alone, been for me so dashed and mingled with pain.

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CHAPTER VIII.

FUN AND MISCHIEF.

ONE of the most entrancing delights perhaps of those young years, was the fun and mischief that went on at night in the early frosts of autumn beneath the crystal October moon, when great troops of us boys would collect around the market place or at the street corner, and thence as from a common rendezvous would go the round of the town on the maddest and wildest escapades. Filling our pockets with sand or gravel before starting, we would take the houses that came forward to the street, and discharging volleys at the windows as we passed, would enjoy the pursuit of the indignant householder who often gave chase but whom we almost invariably baffled by our doublings in and around the side streets, or by our knowledge of the lofts, sheds, or timber yards that offered places of concealment until the danger was passed. At other times we would slip quietly along on tip-toe from the open road, across the pavement, to the front door of a dwelling-house, and setting up against it a round stick of wood just large enough to startle without hurting, would knock loudly, and then stealing away as quietly as we came, enjoy from a distance the effect on the unlucky inmate of the in-falling of the wood when the door was opened.

It was during one of these years of mischief that the negroes who had already accumulated in considerable numbers in the

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village, were enabled with a little outside assistance to raise sufficient funds to build for themselves a chapel. It was a small, unpretentious building of lath and plaster, and was erected on a piece of vacant land fronting the open common immediately in the rear of our house. Although services were being held in it at the time of which I am writing, it was still only partly finished, and for door-steps a number of round cedar logs rolled side by side and piled on one another, formed a kind of footway over which the congregation passed in and out. Meetings were occasionally held during the week nights, and when the windows were open the sound of the hymns would come wafted to us across the intervening distance, as we sat in the garden enjoying the evening breeze. Chancing to pass along that way one dark night, a number of us boys who were probably returning from some other devilment or mischief, noticing that service was being held and seeing the cedar logs that were doing duty for door-steps, it occurred to us that it would be a rare piece of fun to remove those logs, and see what would befall! Taking hold of them at each end we soon removed them out of the way, leaving a clear drop of two feet, perhaps, between the door and the ground below. This done, we secreted ourselves in the darkness behind the stumps on the common in front of the chapel, there to await results. The meetings usually broke up with a hymn, which the congregation continued to sing as they left the building, and on the particular night I am describing, the hymn, I remember, was the good old Methodist one beginning

'When we cross the river of Jordan,
Happy! Happy!
When we cross the river of Jordan,
Happy in the Lord!'

We had not long to wait, for presently from our places behind the stumps we heard the hymn started within, and in a moment or two after, the front door was thrown open, and we were all on end with suppressed excitement. The doorway, at best a

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narrow one, was made still narrower by one fold of it being kept fastened, so that only one person could pass through the opening at a time. The consequence was that when the door was thrown open, although the chorus of voices within gave forth only muffled and indistinct sounds, the one particular voice that occupied the doorway rang out clear and strong, every word distinctly audible in the dark and silent night. Scarcely, however, had this voice time to burst on the ear with the words 'when we cross the river of ——,' when it was as suddenly extinguished, cut short in its rolling jubilation as by the scissors of Fate itself! The unhappy possessor planting his foot forward in conscious security without a thought, had instead of resting on the old familar cedar logs, walked into vacancy and gone over the edge of the precipice into what although only two feet in depth, must have seemed, as to Kent in 'Lear,' like a bottomless abyss. Following close in the track of the first, and unconscious of his fate, came a woman, and as her figure in the door-way from the lights behind stood out in distinctness in the darkness, her voice too rang out sweet and clear into the summer night, but before she had got to the end of the line 'Happy in the ——,' the inexorable shears clipped short her high refrain, and she, too, like her predecessor, went over into the abyss. By this time the merriment of us boys behind the stumps was at its height, the contrast between the high jubilation and the sudden extinction, between the passage of the river of Jordan and the passage from the doorway to the street, tickling our fancy beyond measure. But still they came on one after another, each singing out loud and triumphant as they advanced to the door-way, and each stepping forward gaily and in all simplicity as on to the solid adamant; but one and all extinguished in a moment, their voices punctually stopped at those various points in the verse where the unkindly fates reaped them away; until some six or seven of them lay tumbled on one another like heaps of slain, groaning and howling in the darkness. At last

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the hubbub outside became so great that the crowd inside hearing it began to recoil from the doorway until the cause of the disturbance was ascertained. When this was once known, a kind of wild and universal execration arose; shouts of 'Who did it?' 'Where are they?' 'White trash!' 'Fetch the constable!' and the like exclamations following, until we boys beginning to fear lest someone might have been hurt, and that if search were made and we were discovered the consequences were likely to be serious, decamped across the common under cover of the darkness; each taking his several way home before suspicion had time to fasten on him. No one was really hurt, and although next day there was some talk of information having been laid before the magistrate, nothing farther came of it; and we escaped without the punishment which we so richly deserved.

When the long autumn nights had deepened into winter and the snow lay thick on the ground, a favourite haunt of us boys was one or other of the revival meetings that were held in the little chapels of the village. Attracted by the singing or the noise of the prayers, we would step softly through the partially opened door and take our seats quietly in one of the side pews near the back, whence we could see all that was going on and at the same time pass in and out without observation or disturbance. The older people at the meeting were usually pleased to see us come in, hoping perhaps that some chance word or phrase might be dropped which would sink into our hearts and lead to our conversion; still in spite of this I noted that one or other of the care-takers felt it necessary to keep an eye on us, and when our titter and merriment passed the bounds of decorum to give us plainly to understand that we must either be quiet or leave the room. The meetings generally opened with the singing of a hymn in which we all joined lustily, and when this was over the member presiding would call on one of the congregation to engage in prayer. At this announcement the whole assembly would sink down on

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their knees with their faces to the back of the pews, and in this position would remain without moving during the greater part of the service. For the prayers, it may be necessary to explain, when once started went on as it were of themselves, being caught up by one member after another as the inward fire leapt from each to each, until all were exhausted. Accordingly all being silent for a moment, the member called upon would begin from below the level of the seat in a low voice and in measured steady accents, with little or no excitement or fervour; but presently, as the sense of his own and others' sins fell o'er his mind, and the thought of the burning pit where fiends snatching at him had only just missed him, and from which by grace alone he had been delivered, rose again before his inward eye, he would raise his head from its lowly posture; his voice trembling with emotion would rise in power and compass; the cold sweat would stand on his brow; his words would pour forth in frothing torrents—interjections, exclamations, entreaties and appeals rolling and tumbling over one another pell-mell in the throes of his great and awful agony—until all the rounds and aspects of his life, all his inner hopes, aspirations, and fears being upturned and exhausted, he would draw slowly to a close, or from sheer prostration sink forward on to the seat. So violent indeed did the excitement sometimes become, (especially when after one or two prayers the whole atmosphere of the meeting was surcharged with pent-up emotion) that I remember an old man—a negro—who beginning in a subdued and gentle voice at the end of the seat immediately in front of the pulpit, would, to give himself freer play and expansion as his passion rose, first roll up one sleeve, then the other, then strip off in turn, and all unconsciously, his coat, waistcoat, and neckcloth respectively, until, the whirlwind of emotion being at its height, in desperation he tore off his collar with both his hands, and bared his black shining breast to the air; then only gaining the freedom necessary to enable him to sail along the course of his inner rhapsody without let or

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obstruction;—and all the while keeping time to the rhythm of this rolling stream by a series of movements sideways on his knees, which ended by landing him at the end of the pew opposite to that from which he started. Now all this fine frenzy, this tempestuous emotion, which so stirred the congregation to its depths, and was regarded as an index and measure of the divine afflatus and of the presence of the Holy Spirit Himself, was to us boys a matter of entire indifference, a mere spectacle without ulterior significance, a phenomenon to which we had got accustomed; all our interest being reserved for the various incidents that turned up during the evening, and for which we kept an intent and eager eye.

At the foot of the pulpit and partially encircling it was placed a plain wooden bench known to the people as the 'penitent's bench.' At the beginning of the service it was usually empty, but when once the prayers were well under way, and the electric contagion of the speakers had begun to take effect, half stooped figures would be seen gliding softly from seat to seat in the dimly-lighted room, bending down to the ears of the kneeling men and women among the unconverted, and whispering softly and gently to them of their souls. As result of these confidences you would presently see issuing from one of the pews into the side aisle the form of some young maiden perhaps, who with hair down her back and bended head would walk slowly forward, weeping, to take her place at the penitent's bench, kneeling before it, and burying her face in her hands. After a little interval a young man, perhaps, from an opposite quarter of the room would rise, and walking forward in the same direction would softly kneel beside her; then, perhaps, an old man or woman, until the whole bench was filled with a miscellaneous collection of all ages; their row of rounded backs as they knelt being alone visible to us as we rose in our seats to see. This exodus and procession of figures from the pews to the penitent's bench, unlike the mere uproar of the prayers, had a great fascination for us boys, and as the folk issued from the various quarters of

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the room we would count them faithfully, taking the liveliest interest in their numbers, movements, and personalities, and often whispering and talking so loudly to each other as to bring down on us the threats of the care-taker. The prayers meanwhile suffered no interruption by these movements, but on the contrary rose ever higher and higher in their ecstasy, lashing the roof and sides of the chapel in their gusty tempestuous violence; and the congregation who had hitherto been almost silent now became deeply moved. At first only an occasional 'Amen' had at intervals risen from beneath the pews in response to the words of the prayer, but as the air became more electric and the vault re-echoed with the thunder of the appeals, a whole orchestral symphony of voices kept time and accompaniment to the movements of its varying theme, running like the chorus and evening calls of frogs in the village marshes through all the gamut of sound from the sharp emphatic 'Praised be God!' of the recent convert, through the quavering, bleating, appealing 'Do, Lord!' of the still anxious penitent to the deep, guttural 'Amen!' of the old and settled believer assured of his safety.

Up to this point, however, in spite of the underground swell and roar, nothing was visible, so that when you swept your eye across the waste expanse of pews and benches, save the rounded backs of the penitents and the tempest-tost head of the member engaged in prayer, no human soul was anywhere to be seen, and all seemed as deserted as the sea. Presently, however, certain manifestations as in a spiritualistic *séance* began to make their appearance here and there, and as the prayer mounted ever higher and higher in its rhapsody, first a pair of hands, perhaps, clenched and rigid would be thrown above the general level of the pews, and after clasping each other in a spasm of agony would be suddenly relaxed and drawn down again; a heavy groan marking the spot whence they arose. In another part of the room a second pair would be seen grasping the back of the seat and clinging on desperately as in that picture of the 'Rock of Ages,' till the knuckles were white and bloodless with

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intensity; while ever and again at regular intervals the broad expansive face of an old woman in the corner, in an encircling bonnet of straw, would rise like the moon above the horizon, and after opening its mouth and heaving a deep sepulchral groan would sink under again without further sign. One old woman, I remember,—an old milk-woman of the village—who sat immediately under the stove-pipe that ran along the centre of the room, suddenly one evening in a fit of ecstasy, and to the great excitement of us boys, jumped up with a yell and clasped the burning pipe in her arms, thinking it to be the very form and presence of her Saviour Himself! and when next morning she appeared at our door as usual with her milk can, except that her hands and arms were wrapped in thick masses of cotton wool, no reference was made in any way to her ordeal of the night before.

In the midst of these manifestations, and above the din of sobs and groans, suddenly a great thud would be heard in the neighbourhood of the penitent's bench, which would bring us boys to our feet, craning our necks to see what had happened. It was usually one of the female penitents who as the prayer proceeded, and the unconverted were being shaken in wrath over the very mouth of the pit, had fallen backwards on the floor in a hysterical faint, ('struck by the Holy Spirit' as these good people admiringly phrased it), but except that the sound of her fall served only to redouble the fervour of the prayer and to swell and deepen the chorus of interjections and groans, it had no other effect on the congregation. The prayer went on as usual, no one rose in alarm from his place or appeared to notice what had happened, but quietly and as a matter of course two figures of men stepped noiselessly forward, and picking up the fallen as on a battle-field, carried her to the rear, there to give her fresh air and cool her wrists and temples with the snow. Sometimes, but especially when the atmosphere was electric with sympathy and the tide of emotion ran high, three or four females would be thus 'struck' in the same evening and carried to the

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rear; and although little was said, it was evident from the increased fervour of the groans and sighs that this was regarded by the people themselves as a peculiar and undeniable evidence of the more intimate presence among them on that evening of the Holy Spirit Himself.

The round of prayers being at last exhausted the congregation would rise from its knees, and after a hymn or two would begin what was called the 'telling of experiences' with which the meetings closed. In this exercise old and young converts alike joined, and while affording us boys only one more source of amusement they were listened to by the more serious part of the congregation with all attention and gravity; and as each confessed in turn to the secret or open sins of which all alike were conscious, the narration seemed to be received with a vague and incommunicable delight. Many of these experiences were told with a humility and candour most touching in their simplicity, especially by the older converts who, long since subdued from their first ecstasy, could look back at their past lives with calmness and judgment; but among the more recent converts the lights and shades of the revelations they made were so deepened and intensified by new-born emotion as to present contrasts and transitions at times astounding in their violence. Some told of their previous drunken habits; others (sailing often perilously near the wind) of their carnal lusts; others of the hopeless deadness and *ennui* of their lives. Some, again, dwelt on their brutality, their dishonesty, or their downright criminality, and on how all this had been changed by the new spirit born within them; and with all of these the congregation testified its sympathy by the usual running commentary of exclamations and groans.

It was in the midst of scenes like these that one evening two or three of what we called the 'big boys'—boys some three or four years older than ourselves—unexpectedly entered the chapel and sat down near the back, in the pew immediately in front of where we were sitting. There was something in

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their very presence at one of these meetings, as well as in the peculiar air and attitude with which they took their seats, that made us younger boys suspect there was mischief in the wind. What it was, however, we knew not, nor dared we ask (for your big boy had always a royal gift of snubbing the smaller ones) but presently while the roll of the prayers, with its orchestral swell of sobs and groans was at its height, a sneezing set in here and there from beneath the seats. Confined at first to the neighbourhood of the front pews and those parts of the building farthest away from the stove in the entrance, it spread rapidly and soon attacked promiscuously all parts of the congregation. The member engaged in prayer was the first to suffer, his surging tide of words being rolled back again and ever again with the violence of the seizures, while he still held desperately on; here a groan was cut short in the middle as by an explosion; while there some exultant and happy soul who had started out in the simple faith of being able to deliver himself of his 'Praised be God' in safety, would get no farther than 'Praised be'—when a paroxysm like a cannon ball would blow his jubilation and his sentiment alike into extinction. The old woman in the straw bonnet whose moon-like face rose periodically in the corner, being seized as she rose, would be blown under again without having time to emit her customary groan; hands thrown up in ecstasy would disappear as by magic; while all around, alternating with the violence of the paroxysms, the blowing of noses called to one another from beneath the seats like trumpet-blasts! All were seized, young and old alike; we boys as well as the rest, though unlike them enjoying the fun of it amazingly. So persistent and violent, indeed, did the paroxysms become when they had once fairly set in, that in spite of the heroic efforts made to hold out, the sneezing succeeded at last in entirely quenching the groans, cooling the rapture, and damping the fire of rhapsody and prayer. Groans, prayers, interjections, exclamations and appeals all alike ceased; the congregation rose spontaneously

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as by a common impulse from their knees; all handkerchiefs were put into requisition; and for some time nothing was heard but the violence of the convulsions and the blare of trumpet-responses by which they were followed. Soon all was confusion, dismay and disorder; until at last one old bald-headed gentleman unable to contain himself any longer, and making himself the mouthpiece of the general indignation, leapt nimbly on to the window-sill, drew down the window to the bottom, and then turning round and facing the meeting in fury (sneezing, too, all the time!) offered to give five dollars from his own pocket to anyone who would discover the offender. But it was of no avail, the secret was inviolably kept, the meeting broke up in confusion and dispersed in indignation; and except that it was generally believed to be the work of one of the 'big boys' who had stealthily placed some red pepper on the stove when he entered, the special hand that wrought the mischief remains, for aught I know, undivulged to this day.

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CHAPTER IX.

COCKS AND PIGEONS.

FROM my earliest years I had been very fond of domestic animals—dogs, cats, fowls, pigeons, and pets of all kinds —but in my boyhood this fondness attained almost to the nature of a passion. For several years I lived more or less in the thought of them, carrying them about with me in my imagination wherever I went, wondering what they were doing when I was out of the way, and hastening back from any errand on which I was sent, to be again beside them.

After keeping a number of ordinary barnyard fowls for a time, and then selling them off, my interest was one day aroused by hearing that a German lad from a neighbouring settlement, had brought to the village a pure bred silver grey game-cock, and had sold it to one of our boys. So excited was I on learning this, and so full was my imagination of the thought of possessing it, that I at once hastened to see it, and was so pleased with its appearance that I offered to give my most valued possession, a little iron hand-sleigh, in exchange for it. The offer was accepted and I brought the bird home with me, lodging him for the time being in a little coop which stood at the bottom of the garden. He was a magnificent bird, with great long neck and legs, and an eye which on sight of an enemy turned blood red and flashed like fire. But he had grown rather fat and out of condition, and my first concern was

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to bring him into fighting form again. I put him in a bag to which I had attached a long piece of rope, and getting high up on the rafters of the shed, swung him from them backwards and forwards like a pendulum. I also fed him on pieces of raw meat, hearing it was the right thing to do, and when I had brought him into what I considered proper fighting form, the desire of seeing how he would acquit himself in a pitched battle grew so strong on me that I could not rest until I had gratified it. Accordingly one day I took him under my arm, and sallying forth on to the common at the back of our house, where a number of the neighbours' fowls roamed at large in the day time, I dropped him down, and a fight at once began. But scarcely had he time to show his prowess, when the head of the old negress to whom the other bird belonged, appeared over the fence at the bottom of her garden, threatening to inform on me; so that I was obliged to pick up my bird and run. I then thought of the 'old Captain' who lived next door to us, and of whom I have already spoken. He kept a number of fowls in the yard adjoining our garden, presided over by an immense Cochin-China cock of about twice the size and weight of my own bird. The awe in which I stood of the 'old Captain' had alone prevented me ere this from matching my bird with his, but as I grew more and more restless under my enforced inactivity I resolved one day to venture on it; and choosing a time when I thought no one was looking, I threw my cock over the close-boarded fence that separated us, and watched the ensuing fight through a knot-hole in the fence unobserved. The old Cochin-China fought stoutly but ineffectually, his great fat bulk and slow unwieldy movements being but sport for the dashing spring and untrammelled flight of my light-limbed Apollo; and in a few moments his great comb was all bleeding and torn. In the meantime an old Turkey-cock that was feeding in the yard with the other fowls, seeing what was going on approached the combatants and began to take part with its own side against the intruder; hovering

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about the fight and dashing in at my bird whenever it saw an opening. My cock, however, was not the least daunted by this, but held its own gaily between both its antagonists, dashing first at one and then at the other; when suddenly as bad luck again would have it, the 'old Captain' who was always fussing about his premises, appeared at the end of the verandah overlooking the yard, and seeing what was going on shouted out in his loud resounding way, 'By G—— there's a strange cock in the yard!' The next moment he had passed in high rage through the gate, his stick held menacingly in front of him, and swearing as he went. Fearing lest he might fall on my bird with his stick, I jumped up from the knot-hole where I had been watching the contest with bated breath, and throwing myself over the fence, ran forward to pick up the bird. But the sight of me (who had always been a great favourite with the Captain) acted on the old man like a sedative. Walking over to the place where I was standing, while I was stammering out my apologies and excuses, instead of venting his rage on me as I had expected, he fell into an outburst of enthusiasm, his face beaming with admiration as he related to me as if it had been the charge of the Guards at Waterloo, how my bird had led on the attack against each antagonist in turn, how it had dashed and ducked and wheeled and parried, first one and then the other, (all of which he described on the ground with his stick) and ending up with 'By G—— Doctor, he's a noble bird, and between ourselves he would have killed mine if he had had fair play;'—and then in a whisper, tapping me on the shoulder confidentially, and reverting to his first sensation by the gentlest of hints, 'But get rid of him my lad, or he will get you into trouble.'

Scarcely had my interest in fowls and game-cocks begun to decline, when a new fancy, the love of pigeons, arose within me, and so fired and fascinated my imagination, that for a year or two they were the sole objects of my idolatry. Beginning at first with a few pairs of the commonest sort, I gradually

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added to my stock by breeding or exchange, until in the end I must have had two or three score or more. The shed in which I kept them, and to which I have already referred, was under the same roof as our house itself, but was only partially built in, and was used principally as a place for the bestowal of firewood. It had no ceiling, so that from floor to roof only the great beams and rafters that rested on the stone-work and stretched across it from side to side were to be seen. In the nooks and angles of these rafters I had boarded-in little triangular spaces for the pigeons to build their nests, besides disposing a number of moveable cotes made out of old tea boxes, here and there along the beams. My mother as usual protested at first against my keeping the birds, but as I knew that flying about on the rafters above they were as inaccessible to her as if they had been on mountain peaks, I paid no heed to her remonstrance. I myself, indeed, could only reach them by first mounting on to the wood-pile, and from thence climbing by means of a number of uncertain and slippery foot-holds which I had cut in the side of the wall. The pigeons in consequence were allowed to remain undisturbed, and as they flew from beam to beam, fighting and flapping and cooing and making the rafters ring with their merry notes, I watched their every movement from the doorstep below with feelings of strange and intense delight. They had not been long settled, however, before I began to weary for some new sensation, and in my restless desire to see what they would do under different conditions, I thought I would try the effect of a new combination. I pulled down the boarding from the places which I had built in, and having removed the old tea-boxes from their accustomed places as if they had been so many pieces on a chess-board, set them up again in new positions on the beams. The pigeons thus evicted from their prescriptive and accustomed domains, and uncertain of their whereabouts in this break-down and confusion of all their ancient landmarks, flew about in affright from rafter to rafter without finding rest for

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their feet. Some followed their own tea-boxes to their new positions, others in their uncertainty took refuge in the old corners where their cotes had once been; here a couple of cocks finding themselves in strange places would be seen eyeing one another with an air of deprecation and apology, there another couple, throwing away all ceremony, would be fighting for their own hands like old feudal barons; and the whole place was kept alive with the stir and confusion, until having at last settled down in their new places, order was re-established and the old routine went on as before. But hardly had they begun to get accustomed to their new quarters, when some fresh fancy would seize me, and once engendered, between its conception and execution there was no pause. I got tired, I remember, of seeing them sitting about listlessly on their respective cotes or flying merely from rafter to rafter, and thought how grand it would be to see them perched high up against the very roof itself and flying down from these high points as from some eagle's nest for food, or carrying up in their beaks the straw with which to build their nests. No sooner thought than executed. Once more the scaffolding was removed, the spaces formed by the ridge of the roof were boarded in, the old tea-chests, after having their corners sawn off to fit them into the angles of the roof, were placed in their new positions, and all being ready, the pigeons were caught and shut up in their cotes until they had got accustomed to their new environment; and my mind was once more at rest.

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CHAPTER X.

A MIDNIGHT CAMPAIGN.

THIS rage for pigeons having once set in soon became general among us boys, and cotes were set up on all hands, on the tops of poles and sheds, in stables, outhouses, and barns. In our spare time between and after school hours, we would visit each other's yards to watch our respective birds, discussing freely their points of beauty or deformity, devising new schemes of crossing and breeding, or bargaining with one another for their sale or exchange. In all this our young energies found free and abundant scope, but in our quiet moments when our imaginations took a wider range, one thing was felt by all to be wanting to our full content. Our pigeons were all common birds, and although we discussed the colour of a feather or turn of a wing with as much seriousness and gravity as if they were the last refinements of the breeder's art, we still longed for those fancy birds of which we were never weary of talking, and of whose beauties we had heard so much. But in all the village and country round none such were to be found, our sole extant representative of birth and breeding being an old half-bred cock fantail with red wings, which in some way or other had come into the possession of one of the boys. This bird had long been the centre of interest to all those of us who kept pigeons; the yard in which he was kept was seldom without one or more of us boys watching

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every movement of his neck and tail with intense and absorbing interest; while the fortunate owner carried himself with as much dignity, and was invested by the rest of us with as much importance, as the greater magnates of the City or 'Change by the lesser brethren of the guild. Unfortunately, however, for want of a hen of the same rank with which to mate our favourite, he had to be paired with a common pigeon; and this *mésalliance* which profoundly outraged our sense of the fitness of things, was as much deplored by us all as if the bird had been our own.

It was while thus deeply immersed in the subject of pigeons, that suddenly one day word was brought to us by one of the boys that a number of those fancy birds for which we had so often longed, were being kept by a large and wealthy manufacturer who lived in a fine mansion far out on the hill behind the village. On the receipt of this news which ran from boy to boy like a fiery cross, we lost no time in starting off in a body to ascertain the truth for ourselves. And sure enough when we reached the place, there, sunning themselves on the roof of an old barn or shed before our entranced and delighted eyes, were the pigeons in question in all their haughty beauty—fantails of spotless white, whose curved and quivering necks lay on their great fringed background of tail as on a cushion; great pouters with feathered feet, standing almost erect, with their breasts blown out and wings clapped tightly to their sides like old sentinels on guard; nuns with head and wings tipped with ebony; and jacobins of richest chocolate, whose reversed and upturned feathers encircled their dainty little heads and necks like the ruffs of olden queens. The sight of these radiant creatures, falling like a gleam of the ideal athwart the poor world of reality, struck us with envy and despair, leaving behind it a sense of longing and unsatisfied desire which poisoned all our present possessions. On our return home our own common pigeons once so lovely, now looked poor and mean; we lost all interest in them; even the 'old red-wing'

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himself, whose half-bred tail we had so much admired, fell from favour as a poor bedraggled impostor, and we walked contemptuously by him as by a deposed king! And still the vision of those beauteous birds burned within us like a new-born love unquenchable; and ever as we went to feast our eyes on the glorious vision, we returned more desolate and dissatisfied than before. But as our love and longing grew, so grew our determination to possess them, and although at first they seemed as inaccessible to us as that golden fruit which hung on the fabled tree, our determination was only whetted by the difficulty, until it became our only object of thought. But how to get them? For the rights of the owner we had no respect, or such only as some young gallant has for the old and sapless husband who stands between him and the young and beauteous bride. What could he want with them, we felt rather than definitely thought—he, whose withered affections were too old and seared to appreciate his prize, and who had no boys of his own to enjoy them? Him, therefore, we set aside as a disagreeable obstacle to be overcome, a piece of obstruction merely; and still the problem of how to get them kept returning and swallowed up every other thought. We first thought of trapping them, but it soon became evident that they were too far off over the hill to come within the flight and circuit of our own birds and be enticed by them to our homes, and this scheme had to be abandoned. Next we thought of buying one or more of them—a thing quite within the reach of some of the boys, whose parents would gladly have supplied the money—but we felt it unlikely that the owner would part with them; and the gruff reply of the gardener (to whom we had sent a boy to ask) that they were not for sale, convinced us that it was useless to proceed any farther in that direction. There was nothing for it therefore but to make a descent on them bodily and carry them off like Sabine brides; and this course once felt to be inevitable, we concentrated on it all our energies, laying out our plan of campaign with all the wariness

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of old generals and the cool effrontery of the most hardened and accomplished villains! We surveyed the ground in couples, sending out scouts on all hands to ascertain whether there were any dog about the premises, and if so where it was kept; whether the old gardener slept in the house or was only there in the daytime; what were the best modes of approach, and what the facilities of escape in case of a surprise, and so on. These points being all accurately determined, an informal council of war was held in which we all took part, each giving his opinion with all the air and authority of the most experienced veteran; and after discussing all the probabilities, such as whether with a fair start we could out-run either the old gardener or the manufacturer himself, we soon matured our plan of attack and now only awaited a favourable moment for putting it into execution.

The out-house in which the pigeons were kept had at one time been a barn or stable, and stood by itself in grounds separated from the long garden immediately behind the dwelling-house by a broad public lane, which from the comparative absence of traffic still retained its primitive greenness. The barn itself was encircled by a grove of young pine trees, and behind it, and stretching for a mile or more between it and the village, was the great common of the hill, still covered with the stumps of pines cut down at the opening up of the settlement. The door of the barn was kept permanently locked; and the pigeons instead of finding their way into the loft through the ordinary little pigeon-holes, entered by a small window, the lower sash of which had been specially removed for this purpose. From this window again, projected a large foot-board for them to alight on, and I can still see them walking majestically in and out as under a triumphal arch, carrying their glorious tails above them like banners. Now as this window was some eight or ten feet from the ground, and the opening in it just large enough for us boys to crawl through, the problem before us became simply how to reach

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the window. By a ladder of course, was the universal cry, but as that was likely to expose us to observation at the outset, and might prove highly inconvenient in the event of a hasty retreat, it had to be set aside and some other means must be devised. It was felt by us all, therefore, as a happy thought, when one of the boys suggested that we should construct a special ladder for the purpose, one made of thin strips of pine of just sufficient strength to bear our weight, and with a hinge in the middle by which it could be folded on itself like a carpenter's foot-rule, so that when covered with a piece of baize or oil-cloth it could be carried under the arm like a portfolio. Evidently just the thing, and at once we set to work on it with all our zeal; and long before its completion, that love and longing for the pigeons which like the love for Helen of Troy had been the immediate cause of the campaign, was swallowed up and lost in the fun and excitement of the adventure itself.

All at last being ready, we determined to wait until the nights were moonless, and to meet at a pre-concerted hour after our parents had gone to bed, at the corner of the cross road at the top of our street. At the appointed time all were there, some having stolen quietly out of their bedrooms when the rest were asleep, others having passed out through the back doors, and others, again, who slept in the upper stories, having let themselves down from the window on to an adjoining shed, and from thence on to the ground. There were six of us in all, as far as I can now remember, and all animated with a spirit so bold and full of adventure as in our swelling estimation and conceit to be ready for the most dangerous and desperate designs. Carrying the ladder with us folded up under an old piece of oilcloth, we started off in high glee, talking and swaggering and giggling as we passed along the quiet street in which all the lights were now out, in a way that threatened speedily to destroy all discipline, and to expose us to the observation of our neighbours. Then as some yet

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louder or more meaningless titter than the rest broke out on the night, one of us would call out in irritation 'for goodness' sake make less noise or we shall be seen,' when we would all contract ourselves to a whisper again; and thus in our loose irregular way, now boisterous and now subdued, we passed beyond the open street and reached the foot of the hill. Keeping straight along over its face and brow, we soon found ourselves on the wide expanse of open common on the top, and as we picked our way among the stumps in the silent midnight under the lonely moonless sky, the feeling of tension which up to now had been noticeable only in our unwonted gaiety, became more deeply accentuated. We began to draw more closely together and to lose somewhat of the careless easy swagger with which we started; we became less talkative, and although still eager and aglow with excitement, kept our thoughts more concentrated on the enterprize before us. Moving forward in this way and threading our course carefully among the stumps, our eyes and ears sharpened to acuteness, we would presently be startled by one of our number stopping and whispering excitedly, 'listen, boys, what's that noise?' Whereupon we would all draw up on the spot, and giving our ears to the surrounding night, listen intently; then hearing nothing, would dismiss it with a contemptuous 'Oh! it's nothing,' and resume our interrupted way again. But we would not have gone far when another fancying he saw some suspicious figure in the distance, would stop, and with a 'look! what's that?' again bring us to a halt, all eyes concentrated in the direction in which he was looking; but on once more finding it was nothing, or only a stump, we would all laugh at his fears as a good joke, and start on again as before. In this way we had covered the greater part of our journey and had reached the fence that led down to the barn. We now began to advance more cautiously, keeping close to the fence and moving forward in single file, holding our breath and speaking in whispers; now stopping to listen, and again going forward

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on tiptoe, but cautiously and ever more cautiously as we went,—till we came to the end of the fence around the corner of which was the barn in which our prize lay. Here we drew up, our heads all gathered together in a knot, and peered out from around the corner up and down the lane, our ears all agleg and our hearts (mine at least) beating violently against the ribs, listening to every sound. But nothing was to be heard, the lights in the windows of the dwelling had all gone out, and all was silence around. After steadying ourselves for a moment as for a plunge, we issued forth from the corner, and with a whisper of 'Now, boys, come on!' stepped across the intervening space like old stage villains; and hastily uncovering the ladder, straightened it out and set it up beneath the window in front of the barn. I went up first, I remember, with a box of matches in my hand, and clambering on to the foot-board, pushed my head and shoulders through the opening of the window, and for a moment or two lay there flat on my stomach with my head within and feet without. Inside all was dark as night, and I could not feel sure whether there were a floor to the loft or not, or whether I might really be gazing over the edge of an abyss which had no bottom but the foundation itself. Striking a light as I lay, I saw by its feeble glimmer a plain boarded floor beneath me, with neither hay nor straw to cover it, and around and in the angles made by the sides of the building with the roof, the dim form of the pigeons, and standing out among them in all their distinctness, the white outlines of the fantails. Pulling myself through and getting my feet on the floor, I then put my head out of the window, and whispering 'all right, boys!' gave them the signal to ascend. In quick haste they followed me, mounting one after the other and crushing their way through the window, three of them in all, the other two being left outside to mind the ladder and keep watch on the country round.

Once well inside, we stood on the floor in the darkness uncertain where to begin, and giggling nervously in our per-

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plexity; for it was now apparent that all the fine coolness with which we had planned the campaign and in which we had figured ourselves as sweeping the loft with as much *sang-froid* as if we were a party of bailiffs taking inventory of its contents, was fast ebbing out at our fingers' ends. Indeed could we have found any plausible excuse, I am sure we should have bolted without striking a blow, but from this our pride withheld us, and summoning all our courage, we lighted another match to see where the pigeons lay, holding ourselves in readiness to spring forward and make one captive at least before we fled. But scarcely had the match been lit, when the pigeons grown wild from long neglect and unaccustomed to such midnight visitations, flew distractedly about in every direction, striking the sides and roof in the uncertain light and dropping heavily on the floor, or hanging on by their feet and fanning the sides of the wall with their wings. Disconcerted by this unexpected departure, we were now still more anxious to finish our work, and pulling ourselves together with a kind of desperate courage and each fixing his eye on some one bird before the light went out, we plunged forward into the darkness in the direction in which we had last seen them or whence issued the sound of the still-continued flapping of their wings. The boards of the floor only loosely laid down, creaked and groaned and rattled at every step as we stumbled and scuffled about in the darkness; here one boy having got hold of his bird by the wing only, was trying to secure it while it flopped and fluttered on the floor; there another having secured his first prize and put it under his waistcoat, would while groping about in corners trying to get a second, come against the wall with his head, getting a blow which dazed him; while a third, baulked of his prize and in fright at the noise we were making, increased the turmoil by calling out to us to make less noise or we should certainly be caught. By this time what with the darkness, the noise of the birds, the rattling of the floor, and the time we seemed to have been engaged (for although we had really not

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been in more than a minute or two it seemed to us an hour!) we were getting thoroughly demoralized and confused; the panic which had seized the pigeons had spread to us also; when just as we were beginning to feel that if we did not get out we should to a certainty be caught, and were on the point of retreating with what we had got, one of the boys who had followed the sound of a pigeon to the back of the loft, suddenly went overboard through an unsuspected gap in the floor and was precipitated into the manger below, uttering a cry of horror as he fell! Paralyzed, bewildered, and utterly panic-stricken by this catastrophe, we lay glued to the floor on our hands and knees in the corners where we had been groping, afraid to move for fear of pitfalls within, and in terror of enemies without, unwilling to leave our comrade to his fate, and yet fearing to stay lest we should ourselves be caught. We were racked with horror and uncertainty. The boy himself, meanwhile, had no sooner gone overboard than struggling violently and desperately in the darkness, unconscious of his hurts, he came on the horizontal bars that served as a ladder from the manger to the loft, and was on the floor again before we had had time to make up our minds. And now as by a common impulse, the spell which bound us being broken, we rushed in full course pell-mell to the window, making a great clatter as we went, and crushing through it one after another, our terror increased by the delay, scrambled down the ladder and took to our heels, the last boy being left to leave or take the ladder as he would.

The boys meanwhile who had been left outside to watch, hearing the noise and scuffle within and unable in their inaction to bear the strain of the situation any longer, had deserted the ladder and fled round the corner; and as we rounded it after them in full flight, their heels in the now rising moon could be seen flung up behind them among the stumps ahead. Seeing them flying, and never doubting but that they must have seen something, we redoubled our speed, while they seeing us tearing after them, felt sure we must be chased and flew like the wind.

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Over the common we went, sweeping the ground in a kind of dead intensity of fear without looking behind, unconscious of body or limb in our unfettered flight as if we had been disembodied spirits; taking the knolls and hollows of the ground which we scarcely seemed to touch and which smoothed themselves out before us like a carpet, with the ease and lightness of antelopes. On and around the corner of the fence in the rear of the barn we flew, and then along the hill among the stumps for a quarter of a mile or more before we ventured to look behind, and then drew up breathless and exhausted; the boy with the ladder, who alone had kept his head and who had been left far in the rear, now joining us in hot indignation. 'You're a fine lot of fellows to run away like that! What were you frightened of?' he exclaimed contemptuously, and we finding that the immediate danger was passed, or indeed had never existed, began heaping abuse and recrimination on one another in our turn. 'Pretty fellows you to leave the ladder in that way,' said we to the two recreants from their post, 'did you hear or see anything?' to which they seeking to justify themselves would retort, 'you made noise and clatter enough inside to raise the whole house, and we should soon all have been caught. What did you run for?' and so on until we had exhausted our vein and recovered breath and temper.

Having come to ourselves again, we now began to recount amid much fun and laughter the various incidents of the barn—of our crushing through the window, our experiences on the floor, of the falling through into the manger, and our feelings thereupon—till after walking on together for some time with an occasional glance behind to see that all was well, we at last bethought us of the pigeons themselves, whom in our excitement we had almost forgotten; and taking them out from under our waistcoats which had held them safely pressed against our breasts, we proceeded with much curiosity to inspect our prize. There were only three birds in all, each of us with the exception of the boy who fell through into the manger, having secured one; my

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particular capture, I remember, being one of the white fantails that had so aroused my love and longing. Standing in a group on the open hill under the silver midnight moon, we held them in our hands stroking and caressing them, and I can still remember how the great mass of tail which mine displayed, all fringed at the ends, so different from the 'old red-wing,' and still crumpled with the pressure it had undergone, again affected me with the old feeling of its loveliness and beauty. But as we walked along, the fact that although it was now mine it was yet not mine, began to damp the pride I felt in the possession. I began to think of the consequences, and to feel that the loss of a creature so radiant as this, could no more be passed over without raising the village, or the State for that matter, than if it were the Koh-i-noor itself! Thoughts of what I should do with it, where I should put it, what I should say about it, kept shuttling in a most disagreeable way through the background of my mind, dashed and interlaced with yet more painful associations of the owner, the schoolmaster, the constable, and even the lock-up itself. That this feeling was shared by the other boys in a greater or less degree according to their varying dispositions or temperaments, was soon evident; for on the question arising as to what we were now to do with the pigeons, we each began secretly to try and shift the burden of responsibility on to the others. 'Perhaps you had better keep them for a day or two,' one would remark with apparent indifference; 'No, you had better take them,' the other would reply in the same tone, a third adding carelessly and as if without the least afterthought, 'My box is not large enough for them all;' and all giving more or less plausible excuses for the disinclination which they dared not avow. But the more we each perceived this disinclination on the part of the rest, the more alarmed did we become, and the more did the coil of consequences which threatened us grow and gather until it overspread the whole field of thought. So far indeed did it go, that as we were approaching the brow of the hill and were soon about to separate, one of the more timid

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of us suggested that we should let them go, and they would fly home again in the morning. But having carried out our plan so far apparently without observation or pursuit, this proposal was resented by the rest of us; the beauty of the birds was too much for us; and after more deliberation and discussion, I at last undertook to take them and keep them under a basket in a dark and secluded part of our shed, until the danger had blown over. All being now arranged we separated each to his own home, and I slipping quietly into the shed and putting the birds under the basket for the night, lifted the latch and stole softly along the passage to my bed-room and was soon fast asleep.

For a few days all went well, the pigeons were kept as studiously secluded as nuns, my visits to them to feed or fondle them being made with the greatest secrecy for fear of arousing my mother's suspicions. When the other boys came to see them and we took them out into the light to have a good look at them, we would speak in whispers, and at the sound of my mother's footsteps hastily return them under the basket again. All seemed serene as in a cloudless sky, no whisper of suspicion was anywhere heard, and we were just beginning to feel that all danger of discovery was now past, when suddenly on my return from school one afternoon my mother met me in the doorway in an agony of grief and rage, and broke out on me violently with 'You've disgraced me! you've disgraced me!' I saw it all and read it in her face, and with horrible visions of the constable floating before me, awaited her indictment and recital in dumb and petrified terror. One of the boys as it afterwards appeared, had as usual confided the incidents of our midnight campaign under pledge of deepest secrecy to a special comrade of his own; he in turn had told the old gardener; the gardener his master; and the master had called at our house to make enquiries, after I had gone to school in the afternoon. When he announced the object of his visit, my mother in her fear, anxiety, and shame, and to give him every facility for his search, had lit the candle and conducted him

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through the shed, and there under the basket in its darkest recess he had come on his pigeons and taken them away. Now although struck dumb at the outset, my mind during my mother's recital of what had taken place had not been idle, and before she had finished I was prepared for her. Determining to face it out I affected great surprise, protested that I knew nothing whatever of the affair, and lying like a diplomatist, assured her that I had got the pigeons from another boy, whom I named, in exchange for some of my own, that he had bought them from a third, and the third I was going to say had trapped them, but not being able to stop at any one for fear of bringing home guilt to that one, I had to keep ever on the wing, until the series and chain of links and removes through which the pigeons had come to me became as confusing as a genealogical tree, losing itself in distant antiquity like a pedigree!—a procedure of mine I may say, which had not my mother made up her mind I was lying from the first, and had my own sense of humour not lain crushed for the moment under my fears, must infallibly have damned me. The owner had, it appears, on leaving, thrown out some hints of the magistrate, which my mother took care to emphasize, and for days after in my unrest and uncertainty as to the consequences, the sight of the constable in the distance was the signal for me to betake myself down the first by-street and disappear from public view. Nothing farther, however, was heard of the affair, and in a short time we had all resumed our usual gaiety again and life went on as before.

After the incident above narrated, my interest in pigeons gradually began to decline; I no longer cared for the common birds as I had done before the vision of those fancy ones fired my imagination; and besides, the period during which any one special hobby retains its hold over the imagination of a growing boy, was now approaching its close. But I still continued to keep them, rather from habit than from any active love; until an incident occurred which adding as it did the last straw to

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my growing indifference, determined me to part with them altogether. One evening as we were sitting quietly at home, my mother hearing a noise in the shed, put down her knitting and taking up the candle from the table, went out along the passage to ascertain the cause. I followed her, and on opening the door into the shed, a figure squatting low on the wood-pile and holding a pigeon in its hand, confronted us. It was the boy who had fallen through the loft into the manger, and to my infinite surprise here he now was, caught in the very act of stealing my birds. Putting the best face on it he could, he professed to have come to take away one of his own which he said he had seen flying at nightfall in the direction of our house; but as he was himself obliged to admit that the bird he held in his hand was not his, but mine, his treachery was only too manifest. So thoroughly shocked and disgusted was I with this breach of honour on the part of one of the boys of our own set,—for the rest of us I am sure would as soon have thought of shooting one another as of trapping or stealing each other's birds—that I sold off my whole collection; and so brought to an end a chapter in my history which lingers in the memory of those far-off years with peculiar vividness and delight.

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CHAPTER XI.

MY UNCLE JAMES.

SOME time in the hot early days of July there might be seen entering the village in successive years, a well-dressed, thick-set, but slightly round-shouldered man of about fifty, black-browed, and clean-shaven as a priest, with a light straw hat clapped down on the back of his head, and showing a spotless white waistcoat and high black stock under the light alpaca coat that he wore loosely as protection against the dust and heat. As he sauntered along the streets with his thin lips tightly compressed, and his long, slightly upward-curving nose, to which he ever and again gave snuff, carried before him as if sniffing the air, his grey eyes looked out from under their dark eyebrows on the persons and objects passing, with the curious but bewildered expression of a stranger, or of one who coming from some alien world of speculation finds himself out of touch with the currents of life and business around him. This man was my Uncle James the schoolmaster—my mother's brother—who had come to town to spend his summer vacation, and to enter on one of those periodical drinking bouts that wrung my mother's heart, but which by the enthusiasms thrown up in the course of their eruptions, gave such stimulus to my youthful dreams as to leave abiding traces in the coming years. In his early days he had received a good education, and when quite a youth had gone, his mother's pride, to Sweden as

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English tutor in a Swedish family. There he remained for a few years, and after acquiring during his stay, from the habit of toasting one another over the table, that love of strong drink which was his bane, he returned to Scotland a confirmed drunkard, to break his mother's heart. After teaching for a while there, and doing little good for himself, he was at last persuaded or coerced into emigrating to Canada; and had now for many years past been engaged as schoolmaster in one or other of the country schools in the vicinity of our village. These schools he again and again lost through his outbursts of drunkenness, and again and again reconquered, on probation at least, by the kindly feeling which he everywhere inspired and the high general esteem in which he was held as a teacher. But although managing in a general way by desperate efforts of self-restraint, to hold out against his enemy during the terms, regularly as the vacation-time came round he would appear in the village with his salary in his pocket, and after remaining a night or two at my mother's house, would be swiftly drawn into the current of his temptation; and sitting himself down in one of the taverns in the place, would not rise again until his money was all spent, and he himself, reduced to the last stage of degradation, was flung out helpless and headlong into the street.

On his first arrival in the village he would call at our house, and on my return from school in the afternoon, he would rise to greet me in a friendly way, but with the somewhat precise and formal manner of the pedagogue, and after remarking on how tall I had grown since he last saw me, and making enquiry as to my progress in my various studies, he would sit down again and resume his pipe. About his whole air and manner there was the unmistakeable stamp of the old bachelor. He dyed his hair and disposed it with the greatest care, his chief effort being, I remember, to keep it plastered down on the temples in front of the ears; and every now and again in the course of the afternoon he would rise from his seat without

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speaking, and walking across to the mirror on the opposite wall, would take a small comb from his pocket and looking at himself first on one side then on the other, give the recalcitrant and errant locks that extra touch necessary to give them smoothness and bring them into line again; and then would resume his seat. But in this, as indeed in all his movements, there was something simple, inoffensive, and abstracted; so much so that my mother in her anxiety for him when he had fallen into drink, always spoke of him pathetically as a poor harmless creature with none to care for or look after him, and who couldn't take care of himself. It was not, however, from any want in either eyes or hands that he had this aloof and abstracted air; on the contrary he was master of a number of the smaller practical accomplishments, of which when sober he said little, but which when drunk he aired and ventilated in a way that gave him great vogue and reputation among the vulgar. He had been, for example, a great athlete in his youth, was still excellent with the rod and gun, and knew all qualities of bait and hook-dressing with a learned and experienced eye. Then too he played the flute and guitar well, sang readily by note, and could write a hand, as my mother admiringly declared, that 'looked like copper-plate.' He would do you the Lord's Prayer in every variety of Old English character, and so artistically withal as to be thought worthy of being framed by his admirers and hung up in drawing-rooms; and as for a Bank of England note, he could execute it with pen and ink with such fidelity as in the opinion of many to deceive the very elect. But more wonderful than all to most of them and to me, he made wooden sun-dials with his own hand, with mystic scraps of Latin around the edges, doing the joining, painting, and lettering himself; and more mysterious still, could actually set them up in a garden in such a position that they would tell the time of day! It was not in such matters then, that his simplicity and unpracticality appeared, but rather in his apparent want of interest in the

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world around him, with its roar and bustle of ambitions, its pushings and strivings and money-gettings, through all of which but especially through its trimmed and regulated decorums, he picked his simple and harmless way without offence as through some trimly-laid garden, absorbed apparently in some far-off unworldly contemplation of his own. This as you soon discovered was the great unsounded world of book or school learning in which he was immersed, a world in which an error, especially one of detail, was the primal sin, and ignorance the sole object of censure. Indeed the only occasions, perhaps, on which his usually even temper was ruffled, were when the authority of the vulgar was invoked in support of some well-worn fallacy or truism (it mattered little which) connected with one or other of those subjects which he regarded as peculiarly his own. With an outburst of scornful laughter, his face reddening as if he had suffered a personal affront, he would close his lips tightly and burst out with 'the man is utterly ignorant and can know nothing whatever about it,' then shutting them again with the old emphasis, would silence all further conference. His interest and delight in these themes ran out in many directions, but his special field and the one in which he secretly most prided himself was 'the Mathematics' as he called it, especially Astronomy, the vast reaches of which had fascinated his simple and wondering imagination, and to whose mysterious depths he alone among his own circle was believed to hold the key. To pretend to a knowledge of this high theme without the special *imprimatur* of a University degree, was an impertinence, almost a blasphemy; and to be ignorant of it, was at once and forever to condemn you to shallowness and superficiality.

After unpacking his trunk he would leave the house, my mother in spite of the awe in which she stood of him when sober, not being able to resist hinting timidly to him as he left, to beware of temptation—a remark which always seemed to annoy him, and to which he usually made no answer. From this time

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nothing more would be seen of him until the evening, when as we sat outside enjoying the cool night-breeze, he would be seen in his white hat and waistcoat rounding the corner of the cross-street and advancing quietly along the gentle ascent that led to our house. And now all would be changed with him; it was evident that he had had just sufficient drink to stimulate and excite without stupefying him. His round, clean-shaven face, usually somewhat heavy and solid, would now beam and glow with a kind of inward illumination; the eyes, dull in repose, would glisten in the rising moon like watery jewels; and the stiffness and reserve which usually characterized him, all thawed and melted away in the generous wine, would have passed into that genial unsuspecting good-fellowship in which all were friends and brothers. Shaking hands with us all round as if he had not seen us before, and sitting down beside us, it would not be long before the real simplicity, the sense of wonder that lay at the root of his nature, would begin to show itself, and freed as it now was from its superincumbent folds of stiffness and reserve, would bare itself to the stars and the night as if to drink them in. Prompted by the inner dance and music that the wine was making, he would by way of preliminary break out into scraps of song; but soon breaking off, by some sudden transition of thought or feeling would be drawn aside into poetry. His favourite passages, I remember, were Satan's address to the Sun, in Milton, and Byron's lines in Don Juan describing the shipwreck, beginning 'Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell.' Pushing out boldly and hurrying over the consonants as impediments which his short upper lip found it difficult to compass, he would be soon in full sail, his head keeping time to the recurring cadence of the lines, and waving over them like some high tree-top rocked by the rising breeze. When he had finished and had sealed his high delivery with an emphatic closure of his mouth, he would pause, and after sufficient time had elapsed to allow the echo of this organ peal to take full effect on his imagination, would rise and with unaffected

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rapture exclaim abruptly, 'Grand! such language! such sublimity!' It was evident that he was now in the full tide of enthusiasm, the poetry serving but as whet and foretaste to the grandeur of his great theme—Astronomy—on which he would now embark. Rising and standing on the pavement in front of us, the bareness of his well-rounded temples catching the rays of the slanting moon, he would gaze into the starry heavens around and above him, and as he gazed his sense of wonder seemed to rise and swell before the vast depths of their silent orbs, as the tides on some inland stream. Standing there like some rapt celibate of the olden time, he would begin by expatiating on the 'sublimity' of his high theme; and on the 'profound' knowledge of the mathematics it required; spoke of the 'vast genius' of Newton, as if he saw it stretching athwart the arch of heaven before him like a galaxy, and of his 'gravitation' and 'method of fluxions' as if they were the last apocalypse; until the very night seemed hushed and my hair would creep with admiration! Then descending to particulars he would tell of the calculations of eclipses, the very names of which he pronounced with awe, and of how by these high methods they could 'be predicted to the very fraction of a minute;' investing even figures in his ecstasy with as much majesty and importance as if they were the poles on which the frame of things themselves revolved, and rolling out the exact distance in miles of the moon from the earth, as triumphantly and with as much serious solemnity as if he were announcing a new planet. Rising higher and ever higher in his enthusiasm, he would continue in this way until in his efforts to pluck at the stars and to expand to the greatness which he contemplated, like the crest of some great mountain-wave reaching at the moon, he would at last break and fall; and in the alternation and recoil would be carried down into the troughs and hollows of thought, whence after falling into admiration of himself and his own perfections and rocking himself in them for awhile, he would rise to a height of boasting of his own achievements as colossal and sublime as

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if he had himself given these shining spheres their law and harmony! In this way he would continue his harangue, now losing himself in the grandeur of his theme, now falling into admiration of himself and his own exploits, until I began to think him a real Heaven-Compellor and Trismegistus, and was lost in admiration and wonder. It was not so much from what he definitely said, as from the awe and rapture with which he gave utterance to such magic phrases as 'sublime,' 'profound,' 'vast genius,' 'power of language,' and the rest, all of which sovereign controllers of men's thoughts seemed to me as to himself to partake rather of the nature of divine essences, than as marking shades of distinction among merely human souls. It was this that fascinated and enchained my imagination, and not his facts, of which I as yet knew or understood little; but as I had already begun to make for myself a reputation at school in the elementary mathematics, the tramp of these words and phrases as they boomed and echoed through the brain like some great war-cry, sounded the knell of all baser ambitions, and inflamed my imagination to the full. Presently I would ask him whether he himself were good at Mathematics? At the sound of the word his mood would instantly change, and with an outburst of scornful laughter he would exclaim in a kind of indignant surprise 'Good at the mathematics! Ha! Ha!' then giving his head that magnificent roll as if he saw in vision before him his own excellence blazoned on the canopy, 'Good at the Mathematics! One of the very best! I have solved the most difficult problems in algebra, cubics, and the higher Mathematics!' winding up with a supreme touch and with great emphasis 'No man in Canada can beat me!'

Now all this was said with such reach and magnificence of sweep, with so much emphatic boldness, and serious solemnity of tone, that I was deeply impressed by it and would perhaps venture to ask, partly in good faith and partly to hear what he would say, whether he were not perhaps equal to the great Newton himself! But the mere mention of Newton's name,

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as if there were magic in it, would send him off again into such raptures of admiration, that his own humble achievements which a moment before had filled his sky from the zenith to the sea, now seemed to dwarf themselves into nothingness. 'Newton!' he would exclaim in indignant scorn of me for asking so absurd a question, 'Sir—Isaac—Newton!' each word being separately repeated as if it were hallowed and belonged to a being of another order, 'The boy's mad;' then falling into a kind of reverie he would continue repeating to himself as if rapt in wonder and admiration, 'Newton! Eh! me! such a genius! such a dungeon of a mind!' After which, rousing himself to particulars, he would with great gusto tell the story of how Leibnitz the great French mathematician had sent a problem across the Channel to Newton, thinking thereby to 'baffle' him; and how Newton had at once solved it and sent it back to him the same night;—and at the thought of this stroke of genius, at once so unprecedented, so profound, and withal so improvised, he would weep tears of admiration.

And so he would go on, throwing himself alternately into ecstasy and tears by the mere mention not only of such high and hallowed names as Newton and Laplace, but by such merely abstract phrases as 'the binomial theorem,' 'the higher mathematics,' 'the calculus,' 'the method of fluxions,' 'the law of gravitation,' and the like;—all of which seemed to him to savour of the divine; until the craving for drink becoming so overpowering that he could no longer resist it, he would rise and make his way back to the hotel again.

II.

The ease and play of movement, the rapture and elevation which the drink had given to his long-confined and costive spirit, as well as the fire which it had started coursing through his blood, made it evident to us all that nothing would now arrest him, but that once entered on his downward course, he would continue until he had drained the cup of misery and

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degradation to the lees. Accordingly in the morning and in spite of my mother's entreaties to remain, he would leave the house after breakfast, and sending for his trunk shortly afterwards, would take up his quarters at one of the taverns, where remote from my mother's eye he could drown at once his reason and his cravings unrebuked. So long, indeed, as he had remained in the house, my mother although with no real substance of hope still snatched at its flattering shadow, and comforted herself with the thought that if she could keep him with her, he might be weaned from his temptation; but now that he had gone, and even this poor dream had vanished, she gave herself up to unavailing sorrow. He had been, as I have said, his mother's pride, and the rising hope of the family when they were young together, and the tradition and memory of this early time undimmed by the fast-fading years, in spite of the disastrous sequel,—this, together with the feeling that he was now a poor helpless old bachelor with no one to care for or look after him but herself, united to give her that active anxiety and tenderness for him, which was so marked a feature in her life. Now that he had gone, therefore, and had set out deliberately, poor helpless wight, to stagger and plunge from depth to depth of drunkenness, until he was at last flung out on the rude world in hopeless degradation, she could not rest; but wandered about the house from morning to night, moaning and sighing to herself, going ever and again to the door to look wistfully up and down the street, while her mind, whipped by scorpion thoughts, passed in its efforts to relieve itself, from mood to mood in restless alternation. Now it was indignation, as she thought of the disgrace he was bringing of his own free will on himself and her; now disgust, as she saw in imagination all his year's salary flung on the counter for drink; next moment it was rage against the publicans whom it seemed to relieve her to figure as monsters lying in wait to entice him to their dens, there to fleece him and then fling him into the streets; and when all these had spent themselves, she would

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revert again to her first anxiety for himself, as she pictured him wandering about, poor simple soul, from tavern to tavern, a prey to passing kites, and rolling ever the deeper in dirt and degradation. And worse than all, the conviction which as time went on deepened into a certainty, that he would soon return upon her hands a drunken ruin on the verge of delirium, his money all spent, and he himself a loathsome object, struck terror to her heart. 'Have you seen anything of him?' she would anxiously ask of me every day on my return from school, and if some days passed without my seeing or hearing anything, she would begin to beguile herself with the hope that perhaps some one of the farmers among whom he had many friends, might have weaned him from the drink and taken him with him to his own home. But when I at last returned to tell her that on my way to school or at play I had seen him rounding the corner of some public-house and making haste to enter it by the side door as if ashamed, or had caught sight of his back as he ploughed his way in lines of uncertain straightness between one tavern and another, his coat-tails floating behind him in the wind, then would come her fit again; and rage and grief, indignation and despair gnawing at her heart would wear her almost to distraction.

In this way the days would pass, until unable at last to bear the strain any longer, she would send me around to the taverns with instructions to search him out, and after praying the landlords to give him no more drink, to beseech him for her sake to come home with me. These were my first experiences of bar-rooms, and I can well remember the shyness with which I approached the fat and genial publicans who leaned over the bar in their shirt-sleeves, and the peculiar smile, sometimes ironical, sometimes frank and sympathetic, with which they listened to my message and gave it their assent. I would perhaps have to go the round of two or three taverns before I came upon him, but in the end I was sure to find him in one or other of them, sitting usually on one of the wooden benches

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that lined the room, in the midst of a number of chronic or occasional topers like himself, treating and being treated in turn. There he sat among the 'ignorant herd' (as he called them) whom when sober he most despised, loosed from all sublunary moorings and floating high above it all in a kind of drunken ecstasy; his straw hat all battered and torn at the seams, his waistcoat all covered with snuff and tobacco-ash, and the old alpaca coat all crumpled and dirt-besoiled beyond recognition. His clean-shaven face now covered with a short, grey stubble, and bloated and inflamed to the eyes and roots of the hair, ran over in weeping streams of maudlin good nature; all that peculiar aloofness with which he held himself towards the crowd, had melted and floated down from the high pedantic peak on which it usually ensconsed itself, and mingled in their turbid stream. All his dignity, reserve, and self-respect were gone; and at each deliverance of himself or another, followed by a roar of drunken laughter, he would slap his comrades on either side of him on the back or legs, with vile familiarity. It was clear that he was now content and at peace with himself and all the world, and as he puffed away at his pipe or spread himself out in long lines of boasting, the attentive crowd would listen to his harangue in silent deference, interrupted only by some vain or captious interrogatory, or drunken hiccough of assent.

His theme on these occasions was as usual 'the mathematics' and their dependencies, (for there was nothing low in his conversation at any stage of his descent) but on the special occasion that remains with me most vividly, his talk, I remember, was of Colenso and the Pentateuch. His orthodoxy which had up to this time been untainted, and which in after years I have seen to stand fronting the in-rolling tide of scepticism serene and smiling as some mountain base, had for the moment been sadly shaken by Colenso's book, which he had just been reading. For although insensible at all times to such higher arguments against Revelation as might be drawn from the nature and action of the human mind, or a deeper insight into the world,

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a mathematica argument or calculation always touched him nearly, and at the one point where he was entirely vulnerable; and about the time of which I am writing these arguments of Colenso had gone so far as almost to have wrecked Revelation, and wrenched Scripture itself from its fixture. And although when sober he had from prudence or policy kept his doubts to himself, now that drink had overcome his circumspection he was most voluble in their utterance; and when I entered the bar-room was just about sealing his demonstration, amid the boisterous dissent and uproar of his auditors (whose orthodoxy, on the contrary, drink had only inflamed) by emphatically declaring, as if the foundations of Religion itself had been rocked, that 'in this book it was proved by the most indisputable calculation of mathematics, that the Ark could not have contained the animals that were said to have entered it.'

I had already asked the landlord behind the bar to give him no more drink, before my uncle noticed my entrance, but on catching sight of me as he rose to replenish his glass, instead of regarding me as a disturber of his revels, he came forward in his most smiling, beatific manner to shake hands with me, all the cares and troubles of his life long since forgotten and lost in his drunken dreams. Swaying backwards and forwards like some tower about to fall, he poised himself before me, and as the sense of my mother's real anxiety and concern for him which had brought me there, broke like the fleeting memory of some forgotten love on his confused consciousness, with the tears in his voice and eye he murmured to himself, 'Eh, Nan! poor thing! poor thing!' Then glancing at the landlord and taking in more clearly the object of my visit, he steadied himself against the bar, and with as much solemnity as if on oath, and in the tone of one suffering an injustice, exclaimed, 'But she's wrong! quite wrong! I've not had a single glass! not a solitary glass!' Now this solemn and startling declaration which made the landlord stare, was so familiar to me, it had become so habitual a formula with him when accused or suspected of drinking,

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(never varying more than from 'only a single glass' when he was still in his senses, to 'not a single glass' when he was no longer responsible), that I took no notice of it, but went on quietly to say that my mother had sent me to ask him to come home with me. But in his then state of mind, this ordinary request so tickled him, and grew into such a mountain of humour or absurdity as it made its way into his mind, that he overflowed at last in a boundless outburst of laughter, and patting me on the head affectionately, went on to tell me I was a 'capital boy,' a 'grand scholar,' then turning round to his comrades he was about proudly to exhibit me and descant on my 'abilities' as he called them, when I took the opportunity, his back being turned, to steal quietly out of the door into the street again. There, very generally, one or other of the old *habitués* who was lounging at the corner smoking, and who had been in and out and caught snatches of my uncle's discourse, and been much impressed like myself by his high-sounding epithets, would beckon me aside, and remark in all sincerity, 'Extraordinary clever man, your uncle! What a pity it is! Might have held the first positions in Canada if he had liked! Great pity!'

III.

In this way he would continue staggering daily downward through lower and lower depths, until his money being all spent, he was unable to pay for board and lodging any longer at the tavern, and would be turned out into the street; and as my mother had predicted, obliged to fall back on her for shelter and maintenance. It was usually about tea-time that he made his re-appearance at our house, and my sister and myself as we sat playing on the door-step in the summer afternoon and saw his stooped and heavy figure staggering in our direction, would hasten within, our hearts beating high in expectation, to await the scene that was about to follow. Presently his footsteps would be heard outside, and next moment his face, now glowing like a furnace with drink and heat, would appear in the doorway

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of the room in which we were sitting. Here he would pause for a moment, and smiling in on us apologetically with the fatuous, guilty, and half-silly look of the old drunkard conscious of his sins, would with an effort at formal politeness, and as if uncertain of the reception he was about to receive, stammer out 'How are you?'—each word being pronounced slowly and separately, as if the situation were one of more than usual gravity. Then taking no further notice of us, but closing his lips firmly, he would fix his eye on a chair that stood near the fire-place, and picking his way across the room towards it, struggling hard to keep up the appearance of sobriety, would in his efforts to sit down on it treat it as tenderly and carefully as if it were made of glass! Once securely seated, he would take off his old torn and tattered hat, and sinking his chin into his hand and laying his forefinger along the side of his nose as if in thought, would fall into a kind of torpor, broken only by an occasional emphatic 'aye! aye!' as if in response to some inward soliloquy of his own.

Presently footsteps would be heard in the passage, and my mother who had been bustling about in the garden or shed, and was quite unconscious of his arrival, would come into the room, and as she stood gazing at him in surprise without speaking, he would rouse himself to turn round, and with the same guilty, half-silly smile with which he had greeted us, would make bold to say 'How are you Nan?' But the sight of his flushed and drunken face, daring thus with shameless effrontery to confront her with 'How are you?' added to the deep indignation she felt at what she had predicted having now come true, was more than she could endure; and without acknowledging his greeting she would step forward, and contrary to her usual quiet and gentle manner would break out into a violent rage, ending up with 'You may go back to where you came from, for you will not come here to disgrace my house, I assure you!' Too far gone to make any effective reply to this outbreak, he would fall back in defence as usual

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on his old formula, stammering out with difficulty but with all the emphasis he had at his command, 'You're wrong Nan! you're quite wrong! I've not had a single glass! not a solitary glass!' Now had my mother been possessed of any sense of humour, this astonishing remark must have certainly outflanked her, and shown her how futile it was to argue with him; but in her present outraged mood, and although she now heard it for the hundredth time, she still treated it as seriously as if it had been made on oath for the first; and its barefacedness only served to inflame her the more. Opening her eyes wide in amazement, and standing rooted to the spot as if entirely unable to do justice to it, she would turn round to us appealingly, and say, 'Did you ever hear the like of that?' then striding towards him and bending over him would point to his bloated face and general disreputable condition, and exclaim indignantly, 'How dare you tell me you have not been drinking? Have you not been sitting at old B—'s' (the public-house in question) 'for the last six weeks, until you have spent all your money and been turned out at last ignominiously into the street?' Then after a pause in which there was no reply, gathering herself up and exclaiming with reiterated emphasis, 'But you may go your way again, for you'll not stop here,' she would sweep in a tumult of rage and despair out again by the back door into the garden.

When she had gone, he would look round at us suspiciously, as if we too were enemies, and in an aggressive manner would repeat with the same tone of emphasis, 'She's quite wrong! I've not had a single glass! not a fraction of a glass!' and sink into silence again. But as we responded with 'Never mind Uncle, it's all right, it's all right!' the cheerful and sympathetic tone of our words seemed to reassure him, that in a moment he would become quite confidential, and with a shake of the head and a 'poor Nan' (as if *she* and not *he* ought to apologise!) would then, glancing around at the door as if he saw my mother's flaming figure re-entering, add in an excited

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under-tone, almost a whisper, 'Sh!—or she'll hear you.' All being now comfortable between us, we would then jump on the table and seating ourselves there as audience, ask him to sing us a song. This request in the maudlin state in which he then was, and in which his moods could be turned on and off like a tap, seemed to please him greatly as a homage done to his abilities, and with a laugh of satisfaction, all his cares forgotten, he was soon well under way, his head rolling and face suffused with inner ecstasy; while we tittering and giggling and pinching one another in our delight, roared with laughter at the fun. But our boisterous hilarity was soon summarily extinguished by the re-entrance of my mother. She had been walking up and down the shed in restless misery, all torn and fretted by agitation and grief, when our hilarious laughter broke on her ear and blew her troubled spirit into a flame of rage again. That this 'old sorrow,' as it relieved her to call my uncle, should instead of hiding his disgrace and sitting in sackcloth and ashes repenting of his sins, be so lost to all sense of shame as to dare come to her house and turn it into a very bar-room of uproarious mirth and laughter, weakening her discipline and destroying the *morale* of her home, and worse still that we her children instead of frowning him off in silent frigidity and disapproval, should by our sympathy and encouragement gild and smooth over his shame, was an affront more than her nature could bear. Bursting into the room in the middle of the song, she would rush first at my sister and myself as the prime offenders in the disturbance; but we would already have read her intention in her eye, and jumping off the table would be outside the door before she could reach us. Foiled with us, she would then turn round on my uncle, and crying in her rage 'How dare you come here to turn my house into a Bedlam?' would enter on a detailed catalogue of her grievances and his delinquencies, until she had unbosomed herself of the weight of the indignation that was oppressing her, and exhausted her last epithet of opprobrium and shame. But as the poor inoffensive creature sat there hearing this recital

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without a murmur, she, now all upset at what she had said, would in a sudden access of remorse fall from her high indignation into a plaintive and pathetic lament. 'If instead of going to old B——'s,' she would continue, 'and staying there till all your money was gone, and you were turned out into the street, you had but come here and given it to me to keep for you, I'm sure I would have been glad to take you in and to have made you comfortable; so that you could have gone back to your school again and had something to put aside for yourself when you were too old for work. But now, all dirt and misery, you have no clothes fit to wear; you'll have lost your school; and have none to take you in. Oh! if you would but drop that drink which broke your mother's heart! if you would but drop that drink!' These words of my mother's, the pathos in her voice, and the essential love for him which they revealed, and especially the mention of his mother's name, were sufficient in his drunken mood, like the pull of a trigger, to set him off weeping like a child. In an overflow of remorse, the tears streaming down his bloated cheeks, the poor creature would sit there in helpless misery, declaring that my mother was the best of all his sisters, and sobbing out in broken ejaculations 'You're right Nan, and I'm wrong! My poor mother! I'm wrong, I'm wrong!' the tears continuing to flow with his words, until my mother, her memory crowded with associations of years gone by, which the scene had let loose, was unable to bear it any longer and left the room.

IV.

After a scene like this he would go back to the tavern, and on his return would open the door gently, and passing through the room in which I was sleeping, would, without lighting a candle, grope his way through the darkness into a passage leading to the back of the house. There, on a mattress which my mother had spread for him on the floor, he would lay

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himself down, clothes and all, without a murmur, not daring to come into my room in the face of my mother's indignation. But at last, his money having long since run out, the publicans, to my mother's great satisfaction, would refuse to serve him with any more drink, and he would soon be quite sober again. So great was her joy at this consummation, that she loaded him with small attentions; treating him with all her old traditional respect, and even when in moments of ill-humour the shadow of his misdemeanours happened to fall over her mind, relieving herself of her irritation, not in the free and direct way we have seen, but by a mild and distant kind of insinuation only, which amused me very much, but of which he took no notice. And now it was that the deep effects of his long drinking began to show themselves. He could not sleep, and his hand, especially in the mornings, trembled so violently that he had great difficulty in lighting his pipe or holding his cup of tea without spilling it. He mooned and wandered up and down the house all day long, now going to the door, now into the shed or garden, moving about as one impelled from within by some haunting dream and unable to rest. All of a sudden as he sat at table, he would draw his arms up as if levelling a gun to shoot, then making motion as if laying it by his side again would finish his meal in silence. At other times he would rise from his seat in the middle of his discourse, and going to the wall of the room immediately opposite to where he sat, would squat like a crouching cat for a moment, then springing suddenly up, would sweep his hand across the wall as if he were catching flies, and then resume his seat again. Now as he was quite sober at the time, and spoke quietly and naturally, this extraordinary procedure so astounded me that I took the first opportunity when he was out of the way to ask my mother what it all meant. But to this she would only reply that it was all the drink, that she had often seen him like it before, adding significantly, 'He'll have the delirium tremens before long, you'll see.'

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My mother in the meantime would have washed and scrubbed him into decency again, and now that he was sweet and wholesome he was allowed to sleep with me. One night we had gone to bed early, leaving the big log fire burning brightly on the hearth in front of us, but I had not been asleep long when I was rudely wakened by his grasping my arm and in an excited under-tone calling me by name. Starting up alarmed, I found him sitting up beside me and gazing fixedly at the foot of the bed. 'Do you not see them?' he whispered excitedly when he saw I was awake, and still keeping his eyes fixed on the bed; but except the ruddy glow of the dying embers suffusing the walls of the room, and the loud ticking of the clock in the silence, I saw or heard nothing. 'Mercy! Do you not see them?' he repeated still more excitedly, and as if annoyed at my stupidity, as in my gathering fears, now multiplied tenfold by his voice and manner, I continued staring in the direction in which he was looking. But before I had time to speak, shrinking behind me as if seized by some preternatural terror, he called out, 'It's the devils! Do you not see? See! they're coming!' his eye still fastened in horrid fascination on the bed-cover, over which legions of evil spirits in steady infernal file were trooping with inexorable feet towards him. And when at last, the seconds counting hours with him, they were just about as he thought to clutch him, with a horrid yell he leapt over the bed, and sweeping through the door, his night-shirt blown behind him in the wind of his flight, passed out into the shed. Without pause or interval I leapt after him, distilled with fear, but taking the opposite direction swept in a wide circuit around the foot of the bed into my mother's room, and jumped in beside her. 'It's all the delirium' was my mother's only comment, as in irritation she heard my story and tried to persuade me to return to my own bed again; but it was of no avail, I was not to be dislodged, and there I remained till the morning, when nothing further was said of the matter and all went on as before. In a few days one or other of his friends

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among the farmers would in all probability call at the house and take him with them into the country, to live with them until he had quite recovered, and a school had again been found for him. But it was not always so easy to get him sober even when his money had all been spent, and sometimes, indeed, especially at the Christmas holidays, the difficulty was so great as to reduce my mother almost to despair. The farmers from the country round, many of whom were his friends, thronged the taverns in festive jollity, spending their money freely, so that what with borrowing from them or being treated by them in the daytime, and the shelter our house afforded him at night, there seemed no reason why his drinking-bout should not be prolonged indefinitely. This uncertain continuance of his drunkenness, by foiling my mother's design of getting him cleaned up and in fit state to return to his school again, so fretted and worried her that at last in desperation she resolved to end it by locking him out altogether.

It was on a cold and frosty night about the New Year's time I remember, when about midnight I was wakened out of my sleep by the sound as of a gentle tapping, and sitting up in bed to listen, a low and monotonous moan, as of someone weeping, was borne in on us intermittently from the doorstep; and presently a voice like the far-off wail of some poor creature in distress, moaned out plaintively, 'Nan, Nan! let me in! let me in!' 'It's that old sorrow come back again,' exclaimed my mother, as she heard me sitting up in bed beside her to listen; then after a pause in which his multiplied iniquities seemed to fall thick upon her, she continued in a tone and voice as if the roads to her heart were stopped to all pity, 'But he may go back to those who gave him the drink, he'll not stop here.' Now I was quite old enough at this time to feel that this habit of his, of first spending all his money at the tavern, and then falling back on my mother to keep him, was not right or fair to her; and I tried to reinforce her in her good resolution. But without paying any heed to me, or else telling me to hold

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my tongue, she continued her own course, going through her stereotyped round of denunciation in her own way, now in soliloquy to herself, and now, after snubbing me, addressing herself to me again as audience; at one moment buttressing herself in high indignation, and again falling off into plaintive lamentations, but still without showing any sign of wavering in her resolution; when all of a sudden the sounds from the doorstep ceased, and for some little time all without was as silent as the night. This interval of silence, in her present high tension and uncertain mental poise, was sufficient to give a new direction to her thoughts, as she seemed to see the poor inoffensive creature lying there on the doorstep in this deadly winter night, in a drunken sleep from which he might never awake; and it was with a feeling of relief that a few minutes afterwards we heard the tapping recommence, with the low murmur as of someone weeping, in the pause and interval of the sounds. Her good heart could bear it no longer, and, jumping out of bed, she threw on her clothes, and murmuring 'I cannot leave him there to perish in the cold,' went to the door and let him in. But scarcely had she done so and the door had closed again behind them, when I heard a confused noise like the fall of some great tree, come from the neighbourhood of the door! It was my uncle who had fallen in a confused heap in the entrance when the door was opened for him; and once down he was unable to rise. There was nothing for it therefore but for her to take him by the coat-collar and without further ceremony to drag him along the floor to his mattress in the passage, and this owing to her magnificent *physique* she was able easily to do; and after all these years I can still hear the sound of his heels as they scraped the floor, marking the course of the trail from stage to stage! Leaving him there for the night, she then returned to bed all breathless and unstrung, to continue her laments, while I, now that the excitement of the little drama was over, in the midst of it fell fast asleep.

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And so it continued on and off for years, until I grew into a big lad, when my uncle falling under the influence of some revivalists who had visited the town, was induced to sign the pledge; and from that time onwards until I left home, he remained true to his vow never again to touch the accursed thing. Through the influence of his friends a school was easily secured for him near the outskirts of the town, he lodging with us and walking to and from it night and morning. Once installed, he was quite the old gentleman again, and might be seen in the summer evenings sauntering along, his face clean shaven, and sniffing the air with his long up-curving nose, dressed in new alpaca coat and straw hat, and showing underneath his spotless white waistcoat just that degree of growing corpulency which lent dignity and importance to his figure. But he still remained the old bachelor in all his habits and ways; still rose from his seat every now and again to look at himself in the glass; and although ceasing to dye his hair, still carried with him the small pocket-comb with which when opportunity offered he gave his scattered locks that smoothness of disposal about the temples which he considered essential to his complete toilet. He died shortly after I left Canada for England; and some years later my mother followed him to the grave, and with the memory of their early years still unsullied by the intervening conflicts and sorrows, her last expressed wish was that she should be laid beside him, so that in death as in life they might not be divided.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

IN the open fields far back from the highway and on the extreme ridge of ground that rose above the deep waters of the river, stood a small, plain, unpretentious stone building, solitary among the wide expanse of stumps that surrounded it, and showing its grey and dingy front to the passing traveller as he journeyed northward along the road leading over the hill from the village to the open country beyond. This rude and primitive structure was the celebrated Grammar School of Galt, which already in those years had flung its shining beams athwart the entire breadth of the Dominion, and had drawn to itself pupils from the wide extent of territory lying between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic shore. Hither as to some great public school of the Middle Ages, attracted by the fame of its Head Master, and the roll of distinguished pupils it had sent to the Universities, came in winged flights from far and near the sons of the influential and well-to-do, as well as boys from the village itself, and a small sprinkling of old veterans who having been teachers themselves had come to acquire that knowledge of Classics necessary to qualify them for higher grades of responsibility in their own sphere. And here, too, from out the fun and mischief in which I had hitherto been disporting myself, I was duly entered as a pupil in my fourteenth year, without ulterior or definite aim of any kind on

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my part, but the good fortune that had awarded me the scholarship which was open every other year to the most advanced pupil in the village school. At the time of my entrance there were some hundred and fifty pupils or more in attendance, most of whom coming from a distance, boarded with the Head Master, or in houses under his direct superintendence; the rest, except those of us who lived at home in the village, being quartered at the homesteads of the farmers in the country round.

The high reputation which the school enjoyed was due entirely to the untiring energy of its Head Master, the great Dr. Tassie, then a B.A. of Dublin University, but afterwards honoured for his services with the title of LL.D.—who beginning some ten years before with only a dozen pupils, had by his force of character and unique personality brought the school up to its present high position, and to a condition of working efficiency unexampled, perhaps, among the institutions of the time. He was a stout thick-set man of about fifty when I first came under his ferule, and although carrying with him an easy rotundity and corpulence, still walked with firm, elastic step, and bore himself with great stiffness, erectness, and dignity. In the sunny summer mornings a number of us boys were wont to congregate about the school-door awaiting his arrival, and with that latent defiance of all constituted authority which is ever ready to spring up in boys when they get together, to beguile the time and snatch a momentary relief from the deep awe with which we secretly regarded him, we would profess to treat him as a good jest, making jokes at his expense and speaking of him lightly, and with easy braggadocio as 'Old Bill.' But when his inevitable 'white plug' as someone irreverently called the white top-hat he habitually wore, made its appearance on the brow of the hill, and he moved towards us over the dewy morning grass and among the stumps with a tread steady and resolute as Fate, and especially when he came near enough for us to see the great whites of his eyes as

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he threw them sideways at us over his nose without moving his head, like some old Field Marshal, we involuntarily composed our features to a due decorum and respect, as knowing well that the suspicion of a smile now would be our doom. Onward he would come, with the sternness and rigour of the disciplinarian in his whole carriage and movement, and as if conscious of his own footsteps; holding his stick poised in his hand with a punctilious lightness as if it were for dignity rather than use. His dark and sallow face, clean shaved with the exception of a pair of light tufts near the ears, was large, square, and regular in outline, and although mounted and embossed with a full, round, Roman nose studded over with pores like a thimble, was decidedly handsome; his whole countenance, indeed, when in repose and with nothing to ruffle it, falling into lines of great softness, and wearing by the confession of all, an expression of singular pleasantness and courtesy. This expression, together with the soft, rich, tones of his voice, which, however, had always a snap as of metal somewhere in the rear of them, would by itself have misled the unwary, had it not been for the iron dominion of his eye which swept over us like a blast, and scorched and abashed all that it looked upon. These formidable weapons, before which the oldest veterans trembled, were of light grey colour, and so prominent as to show almost a disc of white around their small central bull's-eye of grey; and had besides, that uncertain scintillation and suggestion of the tinder-box about them, which made you feel that they would strike fire at a scratch and set all in a blaze. They come back to me now as more like the eyes one sees in the portraits of Frederick the Great than any others I remember to have seen, and when he raised them on us quite unconsciously and mechanically as he passed us on his way towards the door, rebellion itself turned pale and nascent defiance withered and melted away. Walking in behind him in respectful silence, we would take our seats, and when the hand-bell had rung to call in the rest of the boys

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who were playing about in the field, after a short prayer which he read from a printed card, the work of the day would begin.

High on a raised platform at the upper end of the room, and commanding the whole of the open area between the row of desks set apart for the senior boys on the one side, and the long row of benches lining the wall crowded with juniors on the other, sat the Head Master himself in all his dignity and state; bending his ear, book in hand, as he listened to the lessons that were being rehearsed to him by a select number of advanced pupils, on a semi-circular wooden form before him. The rest of the boys would be either sitting in their seats waiting for their turn to be heard, or standing at the bottom of the room reciting their task to the assistant teacher; and for a time, except for the shouts of 'silence' that rose ever and again from the Master, and rang like a trumpet over the rising hum, coercing it into limits again, all would go smoothly and well. But presently some more flagrant misconduct on the part of one of the elder boys, or excess of trifling in a junior, would arrest his eye as he raised it casually from the lesson-book to take survey of the room. In a moment his face would darken, and a burning flush mounting to his brow, he would start from his seat, and taking the 'tawse' from the drawer beside him, would descend from his platform to the arena below like some great Olympian; his eyes all ablaze with passion, their great whites rolling red with blood, and flushing, as was well said, literally like a game-cock. Keeping the tawse tightly in his hand behind his back, he would move towards his victim with a tread that shook the foundation and made the very windows tremble; and coming up to the culprit without further remark or word of explanation than 'your hand, sir,' would lay on to it apparently with all his force, but in reality with a self-restraint so admirable and the stripes in number so nicely adjusted to the gravity of the offence, that the punishment which seemed at first like an eruption of Nature, might have been but the execution of some unimpassioned decree. After which, turning round

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with a majesty and dominion in his eye under which we all sat cowering, he would move back to his seat again with a tread more firm and resolute than before. It was this steadiness of gait and movement when in the very high wind of passion, that uniting with the terror of his eye, gave him that absolute dominion over our wills which made us plastic in his hands. Had he been flustered, shrieky, or hysterical in his violence, we should at once have seen his weakness and revolted, (for the mind even in boys must be first subdued) but this firm and even tread, steady as the tramp of a battalion, and keeping time as it seemed to some mighty and invisible will, annihilated all thoughts of resistance; and for the time being stood to us as the moving image of an overmastering fate. Occasionally, on the occurrence of some more than usual aggravation or stupidity, he would lose his temper outright, and jumping up book in hand, would administer a series of cuffs with it on the head of the offender, hissing out at the same time between his teeth, 'you little goat, you!' and following it up if necessary where he saw signs of obduracy with 'I'll teach you, you little cross-grained cat, you!' (favourite expressions these of his both, when for the moment he had lost his even balance), but it was only for a moment, for in the next he would stalk back to his place again with great majesty, the very floor creaking under his iron heels, as if in this high hour his sovereign will had 'stomach for us all.'

This inevitableness and rigour ran into all the appointments of the school, and by crushing out all opposing wills, made evasion, opposition, or escape hopeless and impossible. On his desk lay a slate, new-wiped each morning, and on it the names of those who had missed their lessons were duly written down; and when noon came, and the list was read aloud in a voice steady and remorseless as the roll-call of the doomed whom the guillotine mowed away, we knew all hope of dinner for that day was at an end, and submitted to the ominous word 'confined' that followed, as to some inevitable decree. When the roll happened to be a long and aggravated one, he would

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himself remain with us, and have his dinner brought to him by one of the boys; presiding over the hurly-burly himself, like some incarnate spirit of order,—thrashing, admonishing threatening, acquitting,—until in all things the utmost syllable of his will was done; and the day itself could not close, until the last name had been wiped from the slate.

When the culprit was too old to punish, he relied on the terror of his frown, which was still more formidable. Among the 'old veterans' who entered the school in my time, there were three who in years at least, must have been the equals of the Master himself. Coming with the special object of acquiring a knowledge of Classics, they had been put into a separate class by themselves; and although sensible men all, who had themselves held command as teachers, the difficulty they found in acquiring and retaining without confusion the most elementary forms of verbs, conjugations, or particles, seemed to be almost insuperable; and for sheer stupidity in that line, the school had not their parallel. To bring them forward more quickly, the Master had taken them under his own especial charge, and at a regular hour in the morning, they might be seen standing in the middle of the open floor, awaiting in fear and anxiety what should befall them. A more singular and peculiar three, perhaps, or happier subjects for the wit of boys, could nowhere have been found. There was old G— 'the single-barrelled,' with his one eye, and shock of red hair, and a breath that would have scented the landscape; old C— 'the silent,' who rarely spoke, but muffled up to his eyes in his rough and grizzled beard was so deaf and harsh of voice, that we used to amuse ourselves by mumbling to him something he could not hear, for the express purpose of hearing its rasp; and lastly M—, younger than the rest and something of a dandy, with his clean-shaved chin and flowing side-whiskers trimmed with the greatest care, but with eye-lids red and devoid of lashes as if they had been singed, and who blushed like a maid when he missed his lessons and caught us

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boys giggling at him from behind our books. There the three stood, with us boys poking general and particular fun at them in a good-humoured way, all of which they took in excellent part, when presently the Head Master would move majestically down the room to where they were standing, and taking the book from the hand of the nearest, would with great dignity and a certain air of sub-conscious cynicism, open the lesson with 'Now Mr. C— proceed.' The exercise for the day would perhaps be the declension of some simple Greek noun, but C— would not have gone far in it before feeling himself in a maze, he would begin to halt and stammer, and finally getting the genders of the noun and particle hopelessly intertwined, would be stopped short by the Master turning to M— and calling out 'Tell him next.' But M—, already red to his eyeballs as he saw us boys watching his confusion from our seats, had hardly set out before he too would founder on the same rock as C—, when the Master again looking over his nose in despair at old G—, 'the single-barrelled,' who was the last in the line, would with lip compressed, and as if the case were desperate, say 'Now G—,' at the same time raising the ball of his toe and keeping it suspended there like an auctioneer's hammer awaiting the inevitable collapse; and when at last it came the ball of the toe would fall, and with an 'Enough! gentlemen,' he would move off it, thrusting rather than handing the book to them, and stalking back majestically to his seat with a frown of scorn more withering than the lash, would leave the hopeless three cowed, dumbfoundered, and speechless, to address themselves to their task again.

Among these older pupils, however, there were two much younger than the rest, whose progress in their studies had been so rapid, that the Head Master feeling that they would do honour both to the school and to himself, had taken special pains to prepare them for the University Matriculation. When all was ready and they were within a week or two of the examination, they suddenly changed their minds, and resolved

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to enter another University instead, situated in a distant part of the Dominion, and in which the master for some reason or other felt no interest or concern. Instead, however, of straightforwardly telling him of their intention, they chose rather, as unable to meet the terror of his eye, to quietly absent themselves from school, where their presence was no more seen. On learning the cause of their absence the master said nothing, but before many days had elapsed he came upon one of them in the open street of the village, at a point where escape was impossible. Moving towards him with great stateliness, and a countenance dark as night, he affected not to see him, and the trembling absconder was beginning to hope that he might pass him by unheeded. But just as they were about to pass one another, the master suddenly drew up, and laying the tip of his forefinger on the other's shoulder, called out in a voice of command, 'Stop, Sir!' then bending over him with great dignity, and looking past him but not at him, delivered himself with measured emphasis of this brief and lofty censure, 'Very foolish course indeed, Sir! Very foolish course indeed! Most foolish course! Enough!' And with this word sealing up with laconic severity all opportunity of reply, left him, and swept on his lordly way in triumph.

Now this imperial mien of his, joined to his fate-like steadiness of movement and the terror which his eye inspired, would of themselves have been enough to mesmerize our wills and drive us flock-like before him as by the simple movement of a wand; but to close up all outlets of license, or vents through which doubts could be blown which might unsettle his prestige, he further intrenched himself in the most impenetrable outworks of condescension, dignity, and reserve, that I ever remember to have seen. During all those years I never saw him unbend, or appear in undress; on the contrary he was lordly always, even the pleasantries in which he occasionally, but rarely, indulged, having all the stateliness of a court ceremonial. A polished visor concealed his natural lineaments as

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effectively as an iron mask, and whether he were not entirely a mask might, but for the anger that shone through this visor, have been an open question. He had doubtless like the moon other sides to his mind than those we saw, but like the moon, the face he kept turned towards us was always the same. One does not of course expect one's teacher to wear his heart altogether on his sleeve, but during years of daily intercourse, one does expect to see some glimpses of natural predilection, affinity, or humour peering through. With him, however, none such appeared. Whether he were fond of his office or his boys, or had any preference for one boy over another; whether he had any choice of friends or books; any loves or hatreds; any ulterior aims or ambitions beyond his own school; any private griefs or sorrows, or indeed were subject to such incidents of human life at all, nowhere could be seen; nothing but the enamelled encasement with the great eyeballs glaring through. You could never surprise him in any play of thought, in any natural reaction of pity or of joy, never could catch any emotion on the rise, unless indeed it were anger, and whether that were altogether human or in large part professional merely, could not be divined. It was shrewdly suspected that his knowledge of classics, which was accurate and thorough as far as it went, was limited to the requirements of the University Matriculation examination, but if this were so, we never got farther than mere suspicion, so cunningly did he hedge himself with all the arts and infoldings of reserve. Indeed from the easy assurance with which like a confident swordsman, he took the book from you and asked you to begin anywhere, he might have been an Erasmus or a Bentley! When we sent in our Latin verses to be corrected, he was in the habit of taking them home with him at night under colour of there being no time during school hours, but the boarders declared that it was in order to enable him to correct them from the key which he kept locked in his drawer. Occasionally on some difficulty arising at the bottom of the class as to a

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conjugation or quantity, a shade of uncertainty might have been seen in his look and manner; but he was not to be caught, and turning promptly round to the head boy as if to test his knowledge, but really, perhaps, to settle his own doubts, he would ask: 'Is he right?' If the reply were in the affirmative he would proceed as if nothing had happened; but should a murmur of dissent arise anywhere on the ruling, he would at once break up the class with a stern, 'Look it up, Sirs,' as if to fix the correct answer more firmly in our memories. When the dispute had been settled by a reference to the Greek or Latin Lexicon kept for that purpose in the cupboard, he would return to his seat again, and picking up the book, would say with the utmost *sang-froid* and indifference, 'Well?'—and the correct answer being given him, would proceed as if he had himself known it all the while.

Even his pleasantries, as I have said, had about them all the air of a Court, and were guarded from familiarity by all the arts with which majesty keeps unstaled its state. You were expected, indeed, to respond to his *facetiæ*, but it must be only by a simple yea or nay; and to have ventured beyond this and to have indulged in any slight pleasantry on your own account, would have been at your instant peril. For to his majestic condescension he united a facility, almost a pleasure in snubbing, still more royal in its suddenness and rigour; and with a word, a look, or even a movement of the head, he would smite you without compunction to the earth. Sometimes during the afternoon when the day had gone smoothly, and we were waiting quietly for the clock to strike the hour of our dismissal, he would sit musing to himself in his chair of state overlooking the room, with that seductive graciousness in his countenance, at once so sweet and yet so fatal, which his features wore when in repose. Presently he would call one of the boys up to him, a monitor perhaps, and looking over his nose at him with an easy nonchalance and something of archness in his smile, as if what he was about to say were an exquisite pleasantry, would remark

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in the form of an interrogatory, 'Do you think —— is a goat?' (his synonym for a mixture of dunce and fool), and bending slightly towards him and giving him his ear rather than his eye, he would await his reply. But when the boy had answered yes or no as the case might be, to stop further familiarity and to forbid any suspicion he might have that he was being invited to participate in the pleasantry, the Master would draw himself up again, and with his emphatic 'enough!' would seal the interview and dismiss him to his seat. I sometimes met him on my way to school at a point where our two paths converged, but as a rule he would pass on before me without speaking or taking any notice of me. On one occasion, on meeting him when he was in specially good humour, he happened to make some pleasant allusion to the weather, or the state of the ice on the river below: to which I, prompted doubtless by the honour he had done me, and the nervousness which made me feel that I must say something to break the silence as we walked along, ventured unthinkingly to add some opinion of my own as to the prospects of the weather or the ice; when without pause, in a tone most smooth-tongued but deadly, he snubbed me with a word, so that my cheeks burned to the bone; and ever after, my dread of meeting him, even when I was at the head of the school and was being specially prepared by him for the University, was so great, that I would have gone miles out of my way to avoid him. Many years afterwards, when I had long left the school and was settled in London, he called on me when on a visit to England; and on my accompanying him afterwards to the station, I happened unthinkingly to address him as Mr. Tassie, forgetting for the moment that in the meantime he had had the degree of LL.D. conferred on him, when in a moment, as of yore, with that look in his eye which I knew so well, he stopped me short, and in a tone smooth as a razor and as cutting, said, 'I am Dr. Tassie now;' and in spite of the years that had elapsed, some ten or more, I felt as snubbed and humiliated as when a boy.

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My own progress in the school was rapid. The Head Master being mainly a classical scholar, Mathematics had been allowed to fall into decay, and when I entered, had already been relegated to an assistant master in an adjoining room. From the first my knowledge of it, thanks to the excellent training I had had, was more advanced than that of the rest of the boys; and this among other things helped to give me that general reputation for ability which I always bore, but which was quite out of proportion to my real deserts. Indeed with the exception perhaps of Mathematics, there was no single subject in which there were not some one or more boys, my natural superiors. I had a quick memory, and could cram in great masses of material in a short time, but it was wanting in tenacity, and the knowledge thus speedily acquired was as speedily forgotten. History I learned rapidly, but there were others who retained it better; and as for Classics, although accurate enough in all details of conjugation, declension, and the like, there was still some obstruction in my mind which made me construe badly, and translate with difficulty. My vocabulary, too, was stinted, owing chiefly, I imagine, to my not having read any of the ordinary story-books, where shades of thought and feeling unknown in the talk of the play-ground find firm and definite expression. I had, in consequence, great difficulty in finding meanings, definitions, or synonyms for words *impromptu;* in turning verse into prose, or prose into verse; and when for exercise in English Composition, we were given such a theme, for example, as 'that the ages of man's life are like the seasons of the year,' I can remember standing amazed at the fertility and volume of imagination and fancy with which the other boys illustrated and adorned the theme, while I, struck with utter barrenness, had not a word to say. I had, besides, little power of continuous effort, was better at a spurt than a steady pull, had no toughness of mental fibre, and although resolute in always returning to my task, had the greatest difficulty in keeping my mind from wandering perpetually from the page.

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But it was only the smallest part of my conscious thought that I gave to my lessons, which were confined to the school itself and the half hour or so before bedtime when the fun of the day was over and my companions had all gone home for the night. For my whole mind was still centred on our games and play, on dogs and pigeons, on cricket and swimming, and on such miscellaneous mischief as raids on the farmers' orchards, or the more dangerous enterprise of robbing the wild bees' nests. Flitting fancies of future distinction as a scholar, sometimes rose before me, but they were quickly swallowed up in play again, and it was not until I had entered on the last of the three years of my scholarship, that I began to seriously entertain them. Stimulated at once by the successes of the pupils who had gone before me, by the high reputation I myself enjoyed, by the flattering expectations of the Master and the boys, by my growing years and the necessities of the nearing future, my thoughts turned vaguely, and almost insensibly at first, to some kind of intellectual ambition; and as Mathematics was the field in which I had won the most flattering opinions, I naturally fixed on it as the aim and centre of my hopes, and almost before I was aware of it, found myself walking about encompassed with the most radiant and glowing fancies. I longed to become a great mathematician; the very words had to my ears that grandeur and sublimity that of themselves drew on the mind; and the rhapsodies of my uncle, which had so often afforded me amusement, now seemed all too inadequate for the great and glorious theme. I would walk about the streets, solving problems in algebra and geometry as I went along, or would lie on the doorstep in the evening or on the grass at noonday under the shade of the sweet-smelling pines, and give myself up to reverie, the overarching canopy of my fancy flecked with golden dreams.

In the village, or town as it had now become, a Reading Room had been opened some years before, and on its table lay the choicest of the English and American periodicals. To this

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Reading Room a Library was attached, containing the best known works in biography, history, and fiction. It was here I first came upon 'Punch,' and I can still remember how strange and unintelligible to me were its cartoons and illustrations of London life, where cabmen, boot-blacks, and crossing-sweepers mingled and jostled in unknown dialects with squires and parsons and footmen in cockades. Here, too, I first came on the works of Thackeray, and on dipping here and there into his conversations and dialogues, with their subtle observances of place, priority, and degree, and their modes of address all accurately shaded to the rank and position of the various actors; and all so foreign to anything I had known or seen; I again felt the same sense of strangeness and bewilderment. But it was not for this, or for any curiosity as to the contents of journals, novels, or histories, that I haunted these rooms; it was to read the lives and achievements of the Mathematicians. I soon came on what I wanted in an old Biographical Encyclopedia, where I devoured all particulars of the lives and labours of such men as Newton, Pascal, and Laplace; brooding and dreaming over them as over some fairy-tale of my childhood, and filled with a vague ambition that when I became a man, I might be able to add to their labours by some great discovery of my own. I was always filled, I remember, with a special joy when I found any point of analogy or correspondence between the circumstances of their boyhood and my own; and coming one day on a portrait of Newton in an old Magazine,—with his large, clean-shaven, square-jawed, dreamy face, and his long hair flowing softly like a woman's over his ears,—and not finding any point of resemblance sufficiently to my satisfaction, I felt sad and depressed. But when I went on to read the article itself, and came on the famous saying attributed I think to Leibnitz, that Newton 'seemed to him a celestial genius quite disengaged from Matter,' the picture raised in my mind by the phrase, threw me into such a transport of admiration, that I kept repeating it over and over until I had woven it into the tissue of

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my dreams. But all this fine excess of admiration was not mere waste and evaporation; on the contrary it was a real stimulus, and left behind it a solid precipitate of work; for after giving full rein to my day-dreams I would be so fanned and refreshed by these currents which had blown through me like an April breeze, that on my way home, recalled to reality again, I would set to work on some problem that before had baffled me, and would not leave it until it was solved.

It was in this library, too, and at about this time that I came on the first book outside my school work that I can really be said to have read. This was Smiles' 'Self Help,' and as I read in his pages of how from among the waifs and strays of the gutter and the street, the poor, the sickly, and the deformed, here and there some rarer spirit would like a way-side flower venture from amid the garbage in which it grew, to lift its petals to the sun like the children of the happiest climes; or of how from among those as little favoured by fortune as myself, a few, more stiff-ribbed than the rest, had carved their way up to eminence and renown, I was all aglow with youth and resolution and hope, and resolved that one day I too should make a strike for distinction and fame!

Meanwhile the term of my scholarship was drawing to a close, having but three months to run. I was now the head boy in the school, and the next step would be to prepare to gain a scholarship at the University; but still the master remained severely reticent and gave no indication of what he intended to do with me. I began to feel very anxious and uncomfortable, when one afternoon in the autumn he called me up to him, and asked me if I were willing to prepare for the University Examination of the succeeding year. It was what I had been so long waiting and hoping for, and so overjoyed was I at the new prospect which opened out before me, that like another Hamlet, from that moment I resolved to renounce all fun and mischief, to wipe from my mind all trivial thoughts of play and to let the University Scholarship shine alone in

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my sky like a fixed constellation. I was now sixteen years of age, and except for the thorough grinding I had had in the rudiments and groundwork of Classics, the entire work of the *curriculum* was new to me. It was therefore with more than usual energy and determination that I set to work on it, under the personal supervision of the Master. The honour and pass-work together, included certain books of Homer, Virgil, Livy, Horace, Cicero, Xenophon, Ovid, Lucian, and Sallust; but what with the radiant fancies and dreams of ambition with which I walked encompassed, and which threatened at times to push from my mind the very means by which they were to be achieved, the work itself; what with the tendency I had to keep chasing all kinds of meteoric fancies; what with the difficulty of keeping my mind steadily down to my work,—what with all this, together with the want of toughness in my mental fibre, and the nervous exhaustion which attended any sustained mental exertion, it was only by a series of swoops and sallies, ever leaving the work and ever again returning to it, that I made any progress. Besides, in spite of my renunciation of sport, I was still too young for so heroic a resolve, and lost much of my time at play. But in the interim it too had changed with the silent revolutions of my mind, and was not to me what it had been before. It was now rather as a casual outsider that I took part in the games, than as an active participant; so that whereas formerly play was the ideal world which encompassed the hard and earthy work of the school like a gilded firmament, now it had become a mere relaxation, into which the romance of scholarships and examinations dipped and played, softly folding it in, and lending to it the greater part of its sweetness.

In this way the moving year crept on apace, and on it the web of my little life with its mingled tissue of work and play, all shot through and through with golden threads of gossamer and dreams, stretched and unfolded itself as on a loom; when suddenly about a fortnight before the time of my going up for

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examination, I was taken ill. It was nothing, a mere passing disorder, but catching my spirits at their ebb, it raised in my imagination a haunting fear of consumption which I could not shake off; and I could neither eat nor sleep. The master, prompted at once by real kindness and the fear lest I might be unable to go up for examination, had ordered to be sent to the house a basket laden with the richest soups and meats, together with a bottle of wine, with instructions that when empty it should be returned to be replenished. Feeling better, I set out myself for his house after nightfall, with the basket on my arm, and on knocking, the door was opened by the Master's wife—a very tall Irish lady, with a spontaneous kindness of heart in her voice and manner—who at once in a kind of mild surprise confronted me with 'Are you Crozier?' On my replying in the affirmative, she stood silent a moment and surveyed me from head to foot, then opening her eyes wide in a fine Irish surprise, spontaneously exclaimed as if in soliloquy, 'And so thin too!' After which sympathetic outburst, she took the basket from me and hastened away to refill it; and returning with it laden, placed it in my hand with as much sympathy and kindness in her voice and manner as if I had been her own boy; and sent me forth on my way again. But as I walked down the hill by the winding path from the house, her words 'and so thin too,' which at the time had struck a momentary chill through me, now came over me under the mild September moon with all their force, and I seemed to know that I was going to die. It was the first sensation of that nature that I had ever experienced, and its association with the basket which I carried, and the soft autumnal moonlight, together with the peculiar unearthly feeling that came over me as I saw myself struck by a mortal disease gradually wasting away, made an impression on my mind which time has not effaced. But my speedy restoration to health soon blew all these vapours from my head, and on the eve of the examination, after a few parting words of instruction from the Master, I started off for the University,

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bringing back with me when I returned the scholarship which for so long had been the immediate prize of my ambition; and so brought to a close my period of boyhood proper,—from which time forth my life entered on another stage.

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PART I.

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CANADA.

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BOOK II.

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MY INNER LIFE,

BEING A CHAPTER IN

PERSONAL EVOLUTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

PART I.—CANADA.

BOOK II.—EARLY SPECULATIONS.

PHRENOLOGY.
THE MAN WITH THE BOOT-JACK.
RELIGION.
PAUSE.
A REVIVAL EPISODE.
EVOLUTION NOT TO BE JUMPED.
A CHANGE OF METHOD.
A LAW OF THE MIND—WHAT IS IT?
THE BREAK-DOWN OF PHRENOLOGY.
THE POWER OF LANGUAGE.
MY UNCLE AGAIN.
THE UNIVERSITY.
PROFESSORS.
A NEW HORIZON.

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CHAPTER I.

PHRENOLOGY.

I WAS between seventeen and eighteen years of age when I entered the University, but I had not been there more than a week or two, when to the annoyance of my family and the disgust of my old Master, I threw up the career on which I had entered with so much promise, and returned to my native town. For now that the examination was over, and the honours for which I had been striving were duly won, a reaction set in; and I had scarcely entered on my new course of studies when I longed to get home again. In this curious, and to me quite unexpected revulsion of feeling, a number of strands of various complexion seem by a kind of unhappy conjunction to have intertwined and knotted themselves together. Among other things, I had not yet recovered from the nervous strain incident on the long and severe preparation for the examination; and the presence of some trifling symptoms of bodily disorder was sufficient to engender in me the settled conviction that I had not long to live. It was the first time, too, that I had been from home, and in my low and morbid humour the students with whom I lived, nearly all of whom were strangers to me, seemed to wear a cold unfriendly look, as if separated from me by some infinite distance; and as I walked to and from the college a feeling of loneliness and desolation attended me, which only deepened the more as the

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days passed on. And worse than all, if I must confess it, I had fallen desperately in love some months before leaving home, and the sickening sense of longing that arose in me when I ventured to look athwart the interval of time and distance that separated me from the loved one, was the most operative, perhaps, of all the causes leading to my return. But besides all this I was tired of the class-room, and the barren exercitations of the Mathematics and Classics on which I had been fed so long; and was thirsting for some more immediate contact with the world and human life; and as the prospect of having to spend four years more, grinding in the same old mill, came over my mind, it was more than I could bear. Accordingly with a feeling of secret shame at the step I was taking, and without acquainting anyone with my intentions, I suddenly took leave of the University and reappeared at home.

Low and morbid in humour, oppressed with desolate forebodings of ill-health, and with my heart all in a ferment of confused passions and desires, it was natural that for some time at least I should have sufficient to occupy my thoughts; but as time went on, with nothing to do, I began to feel the want of some more purely intellectual aim, such as I had had in my long preparation for college, partly as refuge from and partly as alternative or counterpoise to these harassing doubts and fears. I had never been a great reader of books, as indeed my school work had left me little time for such recreation, and my imagination naturally found more delight in the games and amusements of the playground than in reading, and was more stimulated by the characters, fortunes, and achievements of the boys, and by observing the life going on around me, than by books. In my later days at school when my heart was set for the time on academic honours, it is true I had conceived a great admiration for intellectual ability, and having won for myself some little distinction in Mathematics, I was naturally led to regard the illustrious name of Newton, for instance, as the symbol and ideal of

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intellectual greatness. But now that I had abandoned all these academic ambitions, and was arriving at an age when the very uprising of new desires of itself leads the mind to wider interests and horizons, this admiration for intellectual ability continued, indeed, but gradually and insensibly began to change its form and to centre around the more practical types of greatness, such as men of the world and affairs, and the great thinkers on the world and human life. Accordingly after a prolonged holiday, when the lull and pause in intellectual activity was becoming oppressive, I began to cast round me in the hope of discovering some study or subject of interest, that would again give scope, activity, and direction to the more purely intellectual powers.

It was not long before this desire was to be gratified by the arrival in town of an itinerant Phrenologist, who in lofty and high-sounding terms and with much assurance, announced his ability to read the minds and characters of men by the elevations and depressions on their skulls. A friend of my own age with whom I was intimate, had gone to the opening lecture, and on our meeting as usual next day, dilated on the new-fangled philosophy with all the enthusiasm of a devotee. I knew little or nothing of the subject myself, and had no idea whatever as to its truth or falsehood, but as he unfolded before me a chart or map of the faculties which he had brought with him from the lecture, and went on to illustrate its meaning by a comparison of his own head and mine, much to my disadvantage I remember, and on a point, too, which touched me nearly, I began to feel decidedly sceptical and hostile! For it so chanced that in the jargon of the phrenologists there was one organ or faculty which loomed so high above the rest, and carried itself with so imperious and mighty a port, that without it all the environing faculties and powers were condemned to feebleness, shallowness, and superficiality. This was the great organ of Causality as it was called, the organ that penetrated to causes and effects, the organ of philosophy,

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of profundity, of genius. Its seat was the top and sides of the forehead, and by the reverence paid to it by the phrenologists I was led to figure it when largely developed as some frowning keep in whose inner recesses were great dungeons of thought of vast depth and immensity. Now my friend had this organ largely developed, as he was careful to point out to me, and so proud was he of his endowment, that he was in the habit of brushing his hair well back from his forehead in order to bring it into greater prominence. My head, on the contrary, had none of this obtrusiveness, but was modestly and even poorly developed in this region, and my friend in consequence was inclined to assume a quite royal air of intellectual superiority which my vanity was by no means disposed to allow. For I had, be it remembered, but recently acquired a great reputation in Mathematics, and associating as I did superiority in this branch of study with the great name of Newton, and Newton's name being everywhere synonymous with profundity, I naturally enough plumed myself on the possession of some small portion of that same great quality, and was much piqued that my friend who had always been backward, if not dull, at school, should give himself such airs of superiority on a basis so shadowy. Not that he was unaware of my reputation or disposed to dispute it, but Phrenology had taught him to make little of the pretensions of Mathematics, which indeed it had relegated to a small organ above the outer angle of the eye—the organ of Calculation namely—as a thing of no mark or circumstance, an organ which when compared with the great organ of Causality overlooking the whole field of thought with sovereign eye, was held in as little esteem as was the playing of the flute by Themistocles! Hence it was that on finding this organ of Calculation sufficiently developed in me to account for my mathematical reputation, he felt himself free to range at large over the rest of my head and to label and pigeon-hole me and my capabilities in a manner by no means to my taste. Hence, too, the distrust, suspicion,

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and hostility with which I regarded this new and pretentious science. But I had grounds more relative than this of wounded vanity for my scepticism. For while my friend was so complacently summing me up, I was quietly running over in my mind the heads of the boys whom I had but recently left behind me at school, and on comparing them with the various powers of memory, music, calculation, language, and the like, which they were well known to possess, I could find no correspondence. It was with but languid interest therefore, in spite of my friend's enthusiasm, and with much misgiving as to the value of anything I was likely to get from it, that I consented to accompany him to the lecture on the same evening.

The Professor, as he was pleased to style himself, was a huge immeasurable mass of fat; dew-lapped, double-chinned, and of middle age; dressed in black like a dissenting preacher, and with face livid and congested as if he had come up in a diving-bell from the deep sea! It was studded and embossed, too, with carbuncles like a shield, and on every side widened and expanded into such a desert waste, as to blur all the ordinary lines of character and blast all the ordinary *criteria* of judgment. But in spite of his great bulk, he was active, even rapid, in his movements; and as he walked to and fro around and in front of the table, expatiating with unctuous fluency on his great theme, his trousers wide and straight as bags, and many inches too short, swished and swirled around his legs like breakers around a pier! Around the room and covering great expanses of the wall on each side of him, were hung rough portraits in black-and-white of the great, the notorious, the infamous of all ages—the poets, philanthropists, philosophers, and murderers—each in a group by themselves; and as he illustrated his subject from these diagrams, pointing now to the high and massive foreheads of a Shakspeare, a Bacon, or a Buonaparte, and comparing them with the pinched and stinted brows of the idiots; now to the low and squat foreheads of the villains compared with the high and sunny tops of

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the philanthropists; or again to the small occiputs and necks of the saints, with the thick bull-necks of the criminals,—some of them with ears standing out from their heads like sails, others with them lying close and flat against the head like crouching tigers,—the room was roused to bursts of admiration and applause. After the lecture the audience were invited to send up to the platform two or more of their number to have their heads examined; and when the Professor with one eye on the audience and the other on the subject he was manipulating, groped his way among the bumps with his fat and greasy fingers, and one by one picked out those peculiarities of character or ability in his subject which everyone at once recognized, the room rang loud with wonder and delight. I was myself much impressed with the truth of these readings, and although still sceptical for the reasons I have given, was so far carried away by the skill of the Professor and the contagious enthusiasm of my friend, as to throw myself into the subject with all the ardour with which at school I had set to work on some new and engaging problem. My friend was convinced already, but to master the subject completely we obtained a copy of Combe's Phrenology—the classical text-book on the subject—and went through it over and over again with the greatest care, discussing with much animation and heat the metaphysical questions (such as the distinction between wit and humour, for example), which like impalpable gossamer arose here and there out of a text where for the most part character and genius were ladled out by the pound as from a grocer's scales! In these discussions my friend whose head the science flattered so highly, supported usually the doctrines laid down in the text, while I, still smarting from wounded vanity and with my old difficulties still unresolved, for the most part found myself in opposition.

We were not content, however, with mere reading, but set to work at the same time to investigate the subject by the true Baconian method of observation and comparison. Of the boys

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in the town most were known to us intimately and personally, and of the grown men and old people nearly all were known by reputation or report. On meeting any of the boys in the street, especially if there were anything peculiar about them, we would be seized with the eager desire of seeing whether the head corresponded with the known character, and the manœuvres we employed for this end were characterized alike by wariness and boldness. The hats of the smaller boys we would snatch off ruthlessly and without apology or remark, as we passed them, while the bigger boys we would crimp or impress by violence, and if necessary lay them down on their backs like sheep, until we had made the necessary inspection and examination! But with the boys of our own age we had more difficulty. They had to be approached by the more circuitous routes of flattery and persuasion, and to be made to feel that consequences of great moment hung on the exact configuration of a certain portion of their cranium; while the old men, again, like patients conscious of being the subject of some malady unusually interesting to the faculty, were usually with a little coaxing easily flattered into acquiescence. So far, indeed, did we carry our curiosity, that no head could anywhere raise itself uncovered in church, or street, or public meeting in our presence, but we would instantly pounce on it like American interviewers, and noting down its characteristic features, store them away in memory for future use. And so strong and accurate did our memory of faces and forms become by this exercise, that even after great lapses of time scarcely a hair could be displaced from its former position without our instantly detecting it!

But the main field of our observation was the Barber's shop in the chief thoroughfare of the town. Here in the evening were in the habit of congregating, as in the Florence of 'Romola,' the local politicians who had dropped in to read the newspapers or talk with the barber on the affairs of the country; the weather-prophets; the tradesmen intent on prices and

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prospects; and young men reposing on the luxurious lounges and waiting their turn to have a 'brush up' before going out for the night. After our usual evening walk we would look in as we passed, and take our seats among the rest; and as each customer in turn took off his hat and defiled along the passage to the barber's chair, we would exchange significant glances at one another from behind the newspapers which we only affected to read, or if we were sitting together, would whisper into each other's ears as if by a common impulse at the same moment, 'great Causality,' 'large Observation,' or if the head were a bald one so that we could see the top, 'want of Firmness,' 'no Self-esteem,' 'low Reverence,' or the like. Occasionally some stranger would enter, and on taking his seat in the barber's chair would exhibit such a boldness, breadth, and capaciousness of forehead that we were constrained to believe that here at least was a genius of sublime and heaven-born intellect and powers! As he rose to go, we would seize the opportunity of starting a conversation with him with the object of drawing forth these wonderful gifts; but when as generally happened we got no more for our pains than did Coleridge from the bumpkin who sat opposite to him at table, and whom, for a like reason, he mistook for a philosopher, we were not in the least daunted or disconcerted, but made our exit airily from the situation by one of those numerous backstairs which, as we shall see, Phrenology so liberally provided for awkward and inconvenient facts. The poor victims of this curiosity of ours, guiltless of the genius thrust on them, were usually quite unconscious of the homage that was being paid them, but some of the more vain among them, apprised like Malvolio of a greatness in themselves which they had never suspected, would become suddenly self-conscious, and pushing back their hats or brushing back their hair, would strut about with much satisfaction! Conspicuous among these latter was the Barber himself, a huge mulatto, with a forehead that rose above his eyes dusky and steep as a mountain cliff, and frowned o'er its

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base like a great sea-wall! This noble and capacious front we were in the habit of comparing with the massive head of the great Daniel Webster himself,—always a kind of Olympian Jove among the phrenologists,—and before the soul that lay behind it, we bent in undisguised admiration and reverence, listening to the lightest word that fell from the oracle, as if it were from the mouth of some ancient sage. But the barber like other oracles was much too wary to be entrapped into giving himself away, and with a prudence and caution equal to his vanity, was dumb for the most part, looked wise, and if pressed too hard would end the discussion by emphatic monosyllables merely. So flattered was he by our admiration and the sweet oblations which we heaped upon him, that as he looked down from his height on the meaner heads of the customers he was manipulating, he would curl his lip in scorn, and to draw our attention privately to the marked contrast between his own head and theirs, would look over at us and wink most knowingly!

Now in all these investigations it was curious how well the shape of the head really corresponded to such rough general traits of character as self-conceit, vanity, combativeness, secretiveness, conscientiousness, firmness, and the like. Whether this were due like the predictions of Zadkiel to a few striking coincidences, the exceptions being slighted, overlooked, or forgotten; or whether, dominated by a pre-established harmony, we unconsciously moulded the character to the head, as we undoubtedly had a tendency to do with strangers; or whether the heads of men, like their faces, have a physiognomy that in a manner represents the character, as one sees in animals, without the necessity of assuming as the phrenologists did that the shape was caused by the pressure of the brain substance immediately underneath; whether for one or all or none of these reasons I cannot say, but certainly at the time the correspondence seemed to me to be established. With the purely intellectual qualities, however, it was quite different;

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they could be brought into correspondence with the organs in the forehead only by a series of extenuations and qualifications that would have done honour to the apologists of miracles or the resurrection! For every difficulty, as I have said, there was a back door of escape. If a head were very large and there were nothing in it, the fault must be in the quality of its brain-texture; if small and betraying unmistakable signs of power, then its quality must be correspondingly good to make up for the deficiency in size. If a special organ were enormously developed, and yet the man gave no sign, his temperament must be flabby, or the convolutions of the brain shallow and shaken out, or the blood-supply poor in quality or composition, or the brain itself may not have matured; or if all else failed, perhaps the man, like the hackneyed 'Paddy's parrot' thought more than he said! But these shifts instead of rendering me more sceptical, fell off my mind like dew, and it was evident that from being sceptical, suspicious, and hostile, as at first, I had jumped to the point of fixed and absolute conviction; and the whole process by which this took place, and by which the mingled mass of truth and falsehood was kept together and prevented from splitting and wrecking itself in contradiction, has always seemed to me to be a fine illustration and epitome of the opinions and beliefs of men. A few instances so striking as to seem more than mere coincidences, generate a belief more absolute than a wider induction of facts would have warranted; and this belief, or 'assent' as Cardinal Newman would have called it, being once for all stamped on the mind as on a coin, becomes in turn itself a despot, coercing all the recalcitrant, exceptional, or flatly contradictory facts into the image of itself, or huddling them away in some dark box over which oblivion is allowed to settle until such time as the system from inherent weakness, change of attitude, or convicted inadequacy, begins to crack and split of itself, its top and sides fall in, and the obnoxious facts, like disimprisoned genii, are once more set free again.

Be this as it may, certain it is that we were now both

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convinced that we were in possession of truths that by their very excess of light struck all the past of the world into darkness; and the effect of this on ourselves soon began to manifest itself. Although sharing as usual in the sports, the frivolities, the pastimes of the other boys—in dances and parties and picnics, in skating and swimming and cricketing and wrestling—we nevertheless in all matters of opinion or belief, held ourselves high aloof, not so much with any obtrusive insolence or overt affectation of personal superiority, as with a sensitive pride and lofty reserve, like high-caste Brahmins, shrinking from contact with the opinions of the vulgar, with whom to taste the pleasures of thought in common were a kind of degradation! We walked much alone and in couples like young curates, holding ourselves as a peculiar priesthood, and keeping ourselves, spiritually at least, unspotted from the world. Our sole book and gospel was Combe's Phrenology, a work we held in much the same reverence as the Kaliph Omar did the Koran when he said of it that all the libraries of the world might be burnt, for their value was in that book. As for the world of thought and speculation before Phrenology, to us it was wrapped in as much darkness as Astronomy before Copernicus or Newton; and the genius of its great men seemed to us as different in quality from that of the founders of Phrenology, as in the old Calvinistic theology natural goodness was from 'prevenient grace'! And this disrespect for the wisdom of the ages, far from seeking to extenuate or deny, with the characteristic thoroughness of boys we carried to a contempt quite royal in its sublimity. In the course of our examination of the portraits and heads of great men, we had been often struck with the prominence in the head of Shakespeare of what the Phrenologists called the organ of 'Human Nature,' as indicated by the great height and prominence (rather than breadth) of forehead in the middle line running up over the brow. That he was supposed to be one of the greatest men that ever lived we knew, and that

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his greatness was supposed to lie chiefly in this very knowledge of human nature we had often heard, but we had never read his works. We resolved, accordingly, to put these high pretensions of his to the test, and procuring a copy from the library, took it with us one beautiful summer afternoon to the high ground above the river's bank; and there in the shade of the sweet-smelling pines, opened at the play of 'the Tempest.' I can still remember how impressed we were at the very opening of the first scene, by his command of nautical phraseology, and of our wondering whether it were not in this sort of thing that his greatness lay; and how struck, too, we were as we read along, with his unexampled power of language; but as to his so-called knowledge of human nature,—we were by no means so certain! We had expected to find the distinguishing traits of the various characters clearly cut out like Chinese figures, and labelled each with its appropriate specification; and moreover, to be told in plain terms after the manner of the phrenologists, what relative proportions of vanity, pride, ideality, destructiveness and the rest, these Ariels and Calibans and other characters had in their composition. But not finding this, we were much disappointed, and thought that in this boasted knowledge of human nature we ourselves could have easily given him a point or two! But then, what could you expect, we reflected, from one who lived before Phrenology? As we read on, however, and came at last to the passage where Caliban speaks of himself and his companions as being 'turned into barnacles and apes with foreheads villainous low,' great was our admiration and delight. What an anticipation of Phrenology, we thought! And what a testimony to the truth of our favourite study! And what untutored powers of observation, too, did it not reveal! We were charmed. Was it any wonder that he should have had the organ of Human Nature in such amplitude as all his portraits showed? And if such powers of observation could exist in the green tree, what would they not have been in the dry? Would that he had not lived before Phrenology!

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CHAPTER II.

THE MAN WITH THE BOOT-JACK.

IT was while this enchantment was at its height, and the pretentions of Phrenology were blown so high as to fill the whole intellectual sky, that there appeared on the scene a figure who by his assiduous care and nursing, kept the bubble a while longer from bursting in my hands; and who besides, by the loftiness of his moral ideal and the stimulus he gave to all that was purest in my own intellectual aims, left abiding traces on my after years. This was the 'Man with the Boot-jack,' as he was called, a mysterious figure who suffered from some obscure affection of the brain, which caused him to wear under his chin for support to his head, a piece of board cut in the shape of a boot-jack, and who at the time of which I am writing was living solitary and alone some few miles from the town in a little unused cottage in one of the outlying clearings reclaimed by the early settlers from the primitive woods. I had never seen him myself, but had often heard of him as being deeply learned in many things, but especially in the mysteries of Phrenology, to whose innermost secrets he alone in all that region was said to hold the key; but in my own private imagination I had always vaguely figured him as some long-bearded, white-haired, old hermit who had gone wrong in his mind, and who had hanging about him, like another Faust, an uncanny taint of the Devil and the Black Arts! With fancies like these in my mind, it so chanced that one

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day as I was walking along the High Street, I saw approaching me on the other side of the way a tall, straight, and almost stalwart figure, in mud-bespattered boots as if he had just come in from the country, and stalking along with much animation and vigour. He was dressed in a roundabout coat of coarse grey tweed, which hung loosely on his raw square shoulders as on a screen; and as he approached, I observed that his chin rested on a board, and the board again on his breast, the whole forming a structure as solid as the beards one sees on the statues of old Egyptian kings! This must be the 'Man with the Boot-jack' I thought to myself, as I conjured up all I had heard; and at the thought a tremor passed over me, and my heart began to beat as violently as if I had come on the figure of 'Nick of the Woods' himself! It was with some sense of relief, however, that instead of the old, decrepit, and long-bearded hermit of my imagination, I saw a man of middle life with a thick, brown, short-cut beard, and walking with a step free and elastic as my own; but as he came nearer and I could see his pale and haggard face, and especially when from above their dark and hollow caves he cast his great eye-balls, round and white and unearthly, as I thought, across the street at me, there came over me the same uncanny feeling as before.

It was not long after this, that one afternoon as I was standing in the book-shop looking along the shelves, the same figure entered, and seeing me, walked straight up to me, and without further preliminary held out his hand, saying simply, 'I want to make your acquaintance.' His voice and manner were so frank and natural that before I had time to think who was addressing me, I was put completely at my ease; and when a moment or two later he suggested that we should take a walk together, I was willing and even eager to go. As we sauntered along he continued chatting in the most free and agreeable way, now and then stopping to shift his boot-jack and ease its pressure on his chin; his manner altogether being so simple, direct, and sincere, so free from all trace of affectation or egotism, that I

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was charmed. But what delighted and flattered me most, perhaps, personally was the way in which he allowed me to fix the theme and give the cue to the subject of our conversation, while he stepping behind, as it were, and listening with sympathy and attention to what I had to say, instead of directly contradicting me when he disagreed, would wind round the subject circuitously, and float it gently off its old moorings, expanding and enriching it at the same time on all sides with the abundance of his own knowledge and experience. In all that he had to say I was struck with his clear intelligence, and the admirable appropriateness and common-sense of his remarks on the casual topics that turned up; but especially by his great and artistic powers of expression, the richness and fluency of his speech, which moved spontaneously to its predestined end without pause or hesitation, with the measured and even tread of a stately and studied harangue; and was decorated all along its way, but not overlaid, with various and pertinent analogies and metaphors drawn from the trees, the fields, and the flowers. Suddenly when the conversation was at its height and was becoming most interesting, he stopped short, and without having shown any previous sign of fatigue, said he must not go any farther as the strain of conversation was beginning to affect his head. On seeing a look of wonder mingled with my expressions of sympathy, he went on to explain (touching his boot-jack by way of token) that he suffered from some obscure affection of the brain which had puzzled and baffled all the faculty; and that it was owing to this that he had been obliged for many years to give up all reading, and that even conversation when it had passed a certain point, fatigued and distressed him. The sensation, he said, was as if a band of iron were being bound round his head and pressed further and further into his temples. Besides he was particularly sensitive to all outward impressions; the mere presence of a person in his room when he was asleep being sufficient to awake him, and even when awake, to exercise a distinct influence over

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him; some people, he explained, affecting him in his body chiefly, others in his head, and others again (he went on to say to my amazement, 'yourself for instance') in both body and mind! I was more perplexed than ever at this, and began to feel a return of the old uncanny feeling, but he not noticing it, went on to say further that this sensibility to impressions was very marked in the case of sounds, and that he was obliged to have all the cracks of the doors and windows stuffed with wool to keep out the murmur of the mill-stream that ran by his cottage door; and that instead of sleeping on a bed like other people, he was obliged to lie on the floor in order to keep off that fear of falling down through infinite space, which haunted him when in bed. As I listened with wonder to this strange recital of symptoms which I had never heard of before, I suppose my face must have betrayed some slight shade of incredulity, for he quickly changed his tone, and by a sudden transition began to complain bitterly of the doctors who persisted in treating him as a hypochondriac, and his symptoms as a delusion; and of his neighbours, some of whom thought that the 'boot-jack' was a device of his to escape from work, and others that his symptoms were the dreams of a disordered imagination merely. And with these explanations he shook hands and turned back, leaving me to my own meditations on the strange things I had seen and heard.

After this our first meeting, he was in the habit of coming into town on Saturday afternoons in the summer months to see me, and that we might have a walk and talk together. On these occasions we retired for the most part to the high ground above the bank of the river, or to the hills that skirted the valley on either side, and which were still, at the time of which I am writing, more or less dotted with the pines left standing from the original clearings. Here lying on the grassy slopes, with the birds and grasshoppers singing and chirping around us, or pacing slowly backwards and forwards in some secluded walk under the trees, he would listen with interest

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and sympathy to my own outpourings, imaginings, and dreams, or would himself discourse to me in strains which to my young ears seemed sublime as those of Plato in the groves of Academe. Scarcely a knoll, or boulder-stone, or trunk of fallen tree around the wide circuit of the hills but remained in after years as memorial of some enlarging view of the world which he had opened out before me there, or was associated with dreams and ambitions of my own, alas! long since departed. Once and once only did I make a pilgrimage out to his hermitage to see him, and this by his own express desire. It was a bright summer morning, I remember, when filling my case with cigars I started off to do the distance on foot—some six or seven miles perhaps—and after a long and dusty journey on the open highway, following the instructions I had received, I plunged into a little pathway leading through the woods, to find myself at the end of it looking out into an open clearing where far in the distance lay the little log cabin of my friend, nestling in its solitude among the trees. It was past mid-day before I arrived, but he was still in bed, and after knocking loudly once or twice I sat down on the doorstep to await his appearance. Presently the door opened, and there stood before me, and stretching out his hand to welcome me, the philosopher himself, without his 'boot-jack,' and with his hair and beard all rough and unkempt as if he had just got out of bed. Glancing around the room as he was dressing, I noticed that the doors and cranks and chinks were, as he had said, all stuffed and barricaded with wool; and in the inner room beyond, the mattress on which he slept lay stretched on the floor itself to prevent the horrible feeling of falling through infinite space, which haunted him when he was in bed. After breakfast which he prepared himself, frying the bacon and making our tea with his own hand, we retired to the old saw-mill that lay some yards from his door, and there, protected from the sun by the roof, and with the soft summer breezes blowing fresh and cool through the gaps in its ruined sides, we sat and smoked and talked and read

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until tea-time, when we rose and went into the house again. It was after sunset before I started for home, when he accompanied me through the wood to the highway and for a mile or two along the road, before he left me to return; making the very night air sweet for the rest of my journey with the lingering aroma of his discourse, and leaving the memory of that day in after years as a pure and delicious dream.

During the earlier period of our acquaintance, our conversation as was natural from my enthusiasm for the subject, turned chiefly on Phrenology; and as I led him over the old familiar ground, he would follow with that kindly acquiescence and deference to my inclinations, which had so charmed and flattered me on our first meeting. His own knowledge of the subject was extensive and of long standing, and his belief in it had been and from first to last remained entire and unclouded. He was familiar, therefore, with all those qualifications and extenuations by which, as we saw in the last chapter, the want of parallelism between the character and the cranium was to be smoothed and explained away; and when, as often happened, I would put to him a case familiar to us both, where the breach between the two was so great as to pull me up and give me sudden pause, he would look at the difficulty for a moment, and without a muscle moving would take it with the utmost coolness and ease; leaving me, if not always quite satisfied, still lost in mute astonishment at his powers. Indeed for dexterity, ingenuity, and lightness of touch in difficult situations of this nature, he was without a parallel, and as an honest casuist, might have taken rank with a bishop! Had it not been for him, the whole system would have cracked and fallen to pieces for me long before it did, but thanks to his skill in propping its falling timbers and buttressing its tottering sides, it continued yet a little longer to hold itself together.

One of my chief debts to this strange and in many ways admirable character, was the stimulus he gave to all that was

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pure and high in my own intellectual aims. His own life was simple and unalloyed with worldly emulations and ambitions, and during the few years of our intercourse we met and walked and talked as if there were to be no past or future but all was to-day. No allusion so far as I remember was ever made to private or personal advancement, to trade, to money, to business, or any of the baser ambitions of the world, none to his fortunes or mine, to what I was going to be or to follow; but embowered and enfolded in an atmosphere of sweet and pure contemplation, and fed on angels' food, life was to be one long holiday, one long sweet dream.

But his moral influence was not less beneficent. For below all this fine serenity and repose of intellectual enjoyment, my heart had long been troubled with a confused turmoil of distracting emotions. The little love-episode that had helped to bring me home from College, and which had begun so bright and sunny, had since then sunk through lowering clouds of jealousy and gloom, and was now staggering down to its final collapse. The young coquette to whom I had given my heart had sought to repay my constancy (which in spite of my general light-heartedness was all too deep and serious in affairs of the heart) with a light capricious vanity and flirtation by no means to my taste; and moved to it by flattery and self-love, was beginning to welcome each new face with a prcfusion of dimples and smiles ever more seductive and sweet; while I, blown on alternately by love and jealousy, and swept by hot irregular gusts of indignation and passion, now in high access of hope, now in melancholy despair, lay stretched in the gap as on a rack, until I had the strength to cut the tyrannous chain, and was free again. Now in all this I had made my friend my confidant, and at each new accession of jealousy was tempted to some momentary act of deep desperation as I imagined it; but on it all he sprinkled cool patience, reason, and a high morality, for which, though disagreeable to my then temper as a first cold plunge, I cannot be too thankful. Like

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Socrates of old he ever kept his eye not on the outward and visible effects of actions whatever they might be, but on the ruinous recoil on the mind that follows on any deviation from the straight but narrow path; and when I had conjured up, for example, some scheme for baffling a hated rival, which had pictured itself to my egotism and self-love as a piece of sweet poetic justice; and had hastened to meet him on his arrival in town to pour it into his sympathetic ear; he would listen to my recital, and like a prophet of old lift up his hand against it unmoved through all the clouds of sophistry by which I sought to win his consent, until my fit was past and I was myself again.

To him, too, I owe my first serious attempt to subjugate the vanity and conceit which were now at their flowering time with me, and which I already felt to be reptiles throwing a trail of slime and baseness over all of good that I thought or did. Of all the feelings of the mind, this of vanity was the supreme object of his animadversion, and the theme of his constant censure; and I can remember in one of our talks his telling me *à propos* of his 'boot-jack' I think, that when he was at my age he was himself particularly under the dominion of this hated weakness, but that now he had succeeded in almost completely eradicating it; and yet not entirely, for on his bad days as he called them, when his head was more than usually affected, he was aware of being more self-conscious and sensitive to other people's opinion than was good or right, and more alive to the impression he was producing on others than was consistent either with dignity or erectness of mind. It was the absence of all trace of vanity, so far as I could see, together with the generous and noble disregard of himself which it gave him, when compared with my own self-consciousness and conceit (always looking in their own glass as it were), that first won my admiration and esteem; and now that he had definitively admitted that he had succeeded in vanquishing a passion to which he had once been the slave, I too was resolved

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to make the attempt, and kept constantly asking him, I remember, how he had set about its subjugation. But beyond the vague general fact that it had been with him almost entirely a matter of time, I could learn nothing definitely of his secret, and after several ineffectual attempts to eradicate the vice by the direct method of declaring forcibly and repeatedly to myself that I would no longer submit to its yoke, I gave up the task as hopeless and awaited a more propitious day.

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CHAPTER III.

RELIGION.

AND yet in spite of the active ferment of thought and emotion that was going on within me, this was intellectually, perhaps, the happiest time of my life. There was in the very narrowness of my views, a fullness, completeness and even harmony, that like the beatific visions of the saints enwrapped me in supremest peace. My faith in Phrenology as the summit and last expression of human wisdom was as yet, thanks to the careful nursing of my friend, entire and unshaken. I had no immediately pressing wants, and like most boys under twenty was too young for the thought of the future to give me even a passing care.

For I was still in the bright and joyous morning-tide of life, splashing and refreshing myself gaily in its shining waters—its games and sports and young ambitions—immersed and absorbed in its glittering baubles around which all the lustres played; still in that golden time when the world over-arched with hope was a resplendent vision along whose vistas no horizon was visible, and in which imagination, insatiate and unbaulked, and ever on the wing in search of fresh delight, found infinite scope wherein to play. Unruffled as yet by the cares of life, unworn by its sorrow, and sipping its dew and foam at every point, the Present was to me an infinite content; while the Future hung aloof in the far off sky like a resplendent moon, before as yet

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the creeping and inevitable years had rounded in its glories to a span, or presaging experience, piercing the mask of distance, had unveiled behind its shining face an airless rocky globe. I had as yet heard no voices, seen no visions to make the solid all-confiding earth yawn and quake beneath me, and I was altogether too young to have had any such experience as that which befell St. Paul on his way to Damascus. Of Salvation, therefore, in any sense of the term realizable by me, that is to say of the necessity there is of some haven of harmony and rest, some abiding rock on which to cling in this wild-engulphing whirlpool of existence, I felt no need; and without the sense of need, the fine logic of the remedy as unfolded by St. Paul in what our preacher called the 'Scheme of Salvation,' and from which human souls for so many ages had drawn strength and sustenance, fell off my mind as from some revolving wheel. As for the shadowy realm of Religion therefore, that other concern of mortal men on which so many noble spirits have been dashed and broken, I can neither be said to have believed in it, nor strictly to have disbelieved it; but with the whole field of sentiment in which it lives already occupied with the little loves, jealousies, and ambitions of the hour, had no room for it, and in consequence practically ignored it or was entirely indifferent to it. It rarely crossed my mind, therefore, and when it did, it brought with it only dreary reminiscences of the days when our old Calvinistic divine, in sermons two hours long, built up anew before us Sunday after Sunday what he called the great Scheme of Salvation, reared on its two mighty pillars the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, between whose high and massy portals the world of human souls driven by inexorable decree, were seen passing onwards to Heaven or to Hell. The consequence was that not only did the recollection of Sunday repel me by its gloom, its stillness, and its enforced renunciations, but the Bible itself, linked as it was to it by association and doctrine, was drawn like an accomplice into the currents of my aversion, and carried down along with it in one

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condemnation. Its high and beautiful poetry and symbolism, wrung from the stricken or exultant souls of lonely prophets, fell on my young unheeding ears like sounding brass, and employed as they were for the most part in bodying forth the majesty, might, or wrath of Jehovah (whose voice I seemed to hear rumbling and echoing from peak to peak like the noise of distant thunder), they struck cold rather than comfort to the heart; while the whole impersonation of God, associating itself almost inevitably with the figure of the old Kirk Elder beneath whose irate and frowning brows we youngsters cowered, instead of attracting, left behind a vague sense of uneasiness or fear. But in spite of all this I have often thought that had the genius and spirit of the Bible been distilled from its connected story, and presented so as to link itself on in a natural human way with the life I saw around me, I should have freely imbibed and assimilated it. As it was, I had too little pleasure in its Sunday associations, and was too much immersed in the games and sports of the passing hour, to take the trouble to read it for myself, and was left in consequence to the mercy of such isolated and disconnected chapters as turned up in the reading lesson, to fragments of historical narrative, and to texts. And here again everything in the mode of presenting the facts was calculated to prevent their spirit and essential meaning from reaching me. Clothed in an old-world phraseology so different from the accustomed vernacular of the school and the street, the chapters divided into separate verses, each of which like independent sovereigns within their own territory promulgated its oracles and decrees independent of its neighbours; each too associated with its special pulpit-voice of supplication or contrition, or eye deprecating, upturned, or solicitous; the whole became, in consequence, so magnetized and changed by these currents of emotion which were passed through and over it, so smooth-worn and enamelled by repetition and use, as to lose all its own natural beauty, sense, or significance. Nowhere did the words, phrases, or sentences so metamorphosed catch on to the

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reality as I knew it within me or around me, but all hung in an enchanted dreamland between heaven and earth where I could not touch them, as in some 'Arabian Nights'; and after a few passes from the preacher, the mesmeric sleep that fell on the text reached inwards to the characters and actors themselves. Pontius Pilate was never real to me in the sense in which any other Roman governor was real, nor was Barabbas even like any other robber. The Jews and Samaritans were not like any other nations of profane history, and the disciples, if fishermen at all, were fishermen only in the merest Pickwickian sense; for although like the gods of Homer they mingled freely in the affairs of men and partook of their good or evil fortunes, they nevertheless were separated from them by that diaphonous, spirit-like transparency which marked them as beings of another order, bearing the same relation to real men and women as one can imagine the Elijah translated and transfigured to the Elijah of flesh and blood. The very atrocities of the Old Testament, which otherwise would have poisoned the healthy moral sense, had about them the same unreal, spectral, and supernal character which mocked all attempts to catch and range them in the category of ordinary human crime; and so, like the tales of giant combats set on by the gods, slipped off the surface of the mind without so much as rippling its repose. Even the soft and gentle figure of Christ Himself, walking serene and majestic by the shores of Galilee with his train of adoring disciples, and shedding his beneficent radiance on sickness, sorrow, and death, had always the golden halo of the old masters around its brow, and was ever the God to me rather than the man. The consequence was that the fine contagion of example which streams in on us from beings constituted in all respects like ourselves, was prevented from reaching me by invisible barriers of demarcation not to be transgressed, and as with that pervading sense of inequality which prevented the high-born manners of the feudal lord from reaching even his attendant serfs, was lost for purposes of life. And the end and

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upshot of it all was, that touching my own conscious life in no part of its circumference, these old-world characters and events with the miracles they brought in their train, hung for years in conscious memory like figures merely, and were carried still clinging to me as I grew into maturity, until at last the bleak and nipping frosts of scepticism detached them from their precarious tenure on the tree; and so, without any transitional period of doubt or uncertainty like that through which so many are condemned to pass, they fell silent and unobserved; and from that time until I started on my 'History of Intellectual Development,' with the exception of an occasional glance to verify some quotation, I have never looked into the Book again. And yet in spite of the dust that has settled on its pages, and the gloom with which in those early days it was invested, it still lingers in my memory with a soft and sombre radiance not untinged with melancholy, now that the receding years with their mellowing hand have interposed to soften its asperities, and the figures with whom it was associated in my boyhood have one by one departed.

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CHAPTER IV.

PAUSE.

THE truth is that at the time of which I am writing, I was completely immersed in the present hour, and in that, interested only in the minds and characters of men; as to the past or future it had no existence. The old men seemed to me never to have been young, the middle-aged to have been the same ever since I had known them. The town and church, the river and market-place still occupied their old positions, and even the old constable who used to chase us when we were boys, was still the same. And in a country of equal freedom where no one stood between you and high Heaven, no interposing hand of despot or priest came in to disturb the even monotony of the days and years. The idea of Evolution, in consequence, or of things having been different from what they are, never crossed the mind; but all alike struck out at a single cast, seemed like the sun and moon and other ordinances of Nature, to have been there from all eternity. Hence it was that all the really intellectual problems of the world, dealing as they do with the growth, the progress, and the decline of men and nations, of philosophies and religions and moralities, lay quite beyond the range either of my experience or my understanding. What were the laws of Nature and of development, the evolution of philosophies and religions, of societies and civilizations to me, who saw no change even in individuals?

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Or the flux of time, when I was not yet old enough to feel it? Or all the varied beauty and pathos of the world, its wonder and awe, the how, whence, and whither of man with his little life emerging out of the silent void, and passing on to the everlasting night—what was all this to one who had only just begun to live? Besides, what did it matter how the world of men got here, was it not enough that they were here, and that I carried in my pocket the tape and calipers that would search and sound them to the bottom? And in fine, what could history, metaphysics, science, psychology, and all the varied learning of the world do, but lead up to this, their final flower and consummation? Was it not natural, therefore, that I should regard with peculiar complacency and satisfaction this knowledge of Phrenology which was to me the finest index and measure of human intellect?

Little, however, as I could have imagined it at the time, it was nevertheless quite impossible that I should continue long in this mood, unless, indeed, I were always to remain a boy, or to develop into one of those intellectual *dilettanti* who are more interested in discussing the relative position and status of men of eminence, than in acquiring the knowledge itself which has given them their fame. On the contrary it was inevitable that as the years passed on, the growing mind pushed on like an opening flower by the emerging desire for knowledge, should tire of this barren rock of Phrenology on which like another Crusoe I was for the time enisled, on which no flowers grew nor fruit ripened; it was impossible that I should continue to remain content with such barren husks, for example, as that this or that individual had or had not this or that faculty or power which I could survey with a tape or a pair of compasses; on the contrary, with the mind just opening to the mystery of the world, it was inevitable that I should be impelled to ask what these faculties had to teach or report of the great world in which they found themselves, and of that human mind of which they were the chess-pieces with which the real game of

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thought was played. And here in passing it may be proper to remark that in this barrenness of fruit, Phrenology bears a striking likeness to the Metaphysics of the Schools, through which I was afterwards compelled to wade, and that it was owing to this analogy and to the use I shall hereafter make of it, that I have dwelt on this exploded system of Phrenology at what must seem to many a disproportionate length. For the aim and end of the teaching of both is to prove that the mind of man is made up of a number of faculties variously sorted, divided, compounded, and named, according to the particular system in vogue. But these faculties and organs are not the mind, but the tools only with which the mind works, the instruments and plummets by which it takes survey and sounding of the world. If this be so, what we want to know is not how little or how much of the organ of the philosopher, the poet, or the mathematician, you are gifted with, but what truths these powers have to reveal when their edge and quality are tested and broken on the rugged surface of the world with its misleading refractions, and the illusory lustres that play around it; what laws of the mind they will bring up in their soundings of human life where the rinds and wrappages of custom, tradition, and opinion, are so dense and impervious as to obscure and conceal the truth. Now not to dwell here on the central error in these early speculations, the full bearing of which will only be apparent when we come to the higher regions of thought, the error namely, that Phrenology if true, was really a knowledge of the laws of the human mind, instead of being but a mere catalogue of faculties, it will be sufficient to remark here that it was not even a true account of the mental operations which it professed to reveal. And yet had I attempted to prove its falsity by its own method of the calipers and the tape, it would with its endless loop-holes of evasion and escape have held its ground to this day. But when I took to observing the world for myself, and to watching the processes involved in the observation of

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different orders of fact, and their elaboration and conversion into thought, I saw that Phrenology even as a tenable scheme of the division of the human faculties, was incredible. Like the cranks and wheels of those engines which work so smoothly and easily in the air, but which when applied to the rails refuse to move, this little scheme of the mind, seemingly so round and complete in itself, when applied to the world which is its natural counterpart, refused to work, and finally fell to pieces from internal incoherence and decay. Indeed its essential barrenness and uselessness for aid in the actual processes of thought became so manifest when I turned my attention to the world, that it was practically forgotten and laid aside long before its final collapse.

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CHAPTER V.

A REVIVAL EPISODE.

THE first incident that occurred to divert my thoughts from their exclusive devotion to Phrenology, to break its enchantment, and to fix my mind on the great outside world of thought and speculation which was to be to me the grave of it and of all other metaphysical systems, was the arrival in town of a couple of Revivalist preachers, who by the excitement they caused and the passions they aroused, split the town into hostile camps, and left behind them bitter memories for many years. They had begun their campaign by preaching in the open air from a pile of old scaffolding in one of the vacant spaces, but it was not long before, gaining the friendly sympathy of one of the leading preachers, they were invited by him to make use of his pulpit in the large church in the centre of the town. Once securely entrenched there, and with a large congregation to listen to their words, they began a vigorous and systematic attack on the ministers of the outlying churches, whom they denounced for their cold-blooded, dead, and barren formalism, characterizing their religion as 'filthy rags,' and themselves as 'wolves in sheep's clothing who were leading their flocks to Hell.' To amenities like these the outraged preachers were not slow in responding from their pulpits on the neighbouring hills, but wakened from their long sleep by the falling shell, hastened to open fire on the

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intruders; a general bombardment ensued; and presently the whole town was ablaze with the fire and rockets from the circle of the surrounding batteries. The inhabitants themselves who felt each his pastor's insult as his own, now joined in the fray; the ordinary subjects of interest and conversation were for the time suspended; excited groups stood at street corners discussing the last phases of the controversy, and at times the hot blood ran so high that, as in an old Italian city of the Middle Ages, there was difficulty in keeping the peace. The individual members of the various congregations, meantime, who had sat enchanted or asleep in the same old church and in the same old pews from the earliest times, awakened into life by the rising heat, began like chemical compounds loosened from their old combinations, to form new affinities, and to pass from one church to another; leaving the 'old lights' and joining the 'new' or *vice versâ* according to the secret promptings of their temper or heart. The guiding principle in these movements was not one of family, but was purely a personal one, and might best be seen in the answer given to this one question,—Have you or have you not experienced that change of heart known as 'conversion?' If you had, you were silently attracted from the outlying churches to the revival camp in the centre; if not, shocked by the outrage done to your sensibilities by imputations so offensive and gross as those of the Revivalists, you fled for refuge and sympathy to your friends on the frontier. In this way family was divided against family, father-in-law against son-in-law, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, till it became literally and painfully true that a man's foes were those of his own household.

Not less strange and remarkable were the sudden curves and turnings taken by the same persons during the course of the campaign. One old 'elder' belonging to the central church, I remember, and a most upright, pious, and worthy man, was so shocked by the terms in which the regular ministers had been characterized, that he went about loudly proclaiming that

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insolence like this was not to be borne, and that the offensive intruders should be altogether forbidden the use of the pulpit which they had so fouled and disgraced. But not finding a sufficient number of sympathizers to support him, he was about to shake the dust off his feet and remove with his household gods to one of the outlying congregations, when just as he was gathering up his skirts to depart, he was arrested on the threshold by a stray shot from the burning *repertoire* of the revivalist, and brought to the earth, 'converted' on the spot and in a moment, as he said, like St. Paul on the way to Damascus. Henceforward with the terror of the man who has just put foot on the solid earth to find that the log over which he has crossed the raging stream, has been swept away behind him by the flood, he seemed so horror-stricken at the thought of the danger he had escaped, that he went about proclaiming that the words of the Revivalists, which but yesterday he had declared to be blasphemous, were in reality but the words of truth and soberness, and that he would have sat there in his sins, trusting to his piety, his respectability, and his 'good works' until he had gone down to perdition, but for the arrival in town of these men.

Now of all this I was a silent but not inattentive spectator. From my early boyhood I had taken a lively interest in these revival meetings, and when one had broken out anywhere, I was usually to be found hovering about the doors and side aisles, looking and listening to what was going on. This was mainly out of curiosity, especially when the excitement ran high, and men and women 'struck' to the ground were carried out fainting and speechless; but as I grew older there was mingled with it a thin film or thread of another order, which appeared and reappeared for many years. Night after night I had seen boys and girls of my own age, as well as full-bearded men, melted into tears under the burning words of the preacher, and with drooping heads passing along the aisles to the 'penitents' bench' to make confession of their sins, while I remained unmoved. Was there, then, something wanting in me that I was deaf to

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such appeals? Was it possible that I who so much felt the need of human sympathy, should be for ever condemned to walk apart in lonely isolation, unable to refresh my mind by mingling it in the common human stream? I could not tell, but the haunting suspicion that it was so, came over my mind whenever I entered these meetings, like an ominous bird; hence the fascination with which I kept returning to them again and again, as a man to an object he partly dreads, in order to test myself and see whether I should still remain unmoved.

And so, when the particular revival of which I am writing broke out, I was to be found as usual among the curious listeners who hung about its out-skirts without taking any direct part in its proceedings. I was usually accompanied by the young friend of whom I have already spoken, with whom I began the study of phrenology, and our custom was to drop in at the service after our evening walk, and to discuss on our way home the phenomena we had seen and heard, from what we regarded as our superior stand-point as philosophers. My friend especially, I remember, gave himself great airs of superiority, and made himself very merry over the poor dupes, as he called them, who imagined that these manifestations and sudden conversions were due to the workings of the Holy Spirit; comparing them in their ignorance to those who thought that the phenomena of epilepsy were due to possession by the Devil. What therefore was my surprise when on my return after being absent a few evenings, I saw him kneeling in his pew when I entered the church; and my amazement when he told me as we walked home, that he was a new man, and that he had undergone the change of heart known as 'conversion.' Of the reality of this change and of his sincerity and earnestness I could have no doubt. He disappeared from his old haunts and from the ball-rooms and parties where he had been so prominent and welcome a figure, and was to be seen nowhere but at these meetings. He gave up smoking and drinking, cut himself apart from all his old companions

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except myself, and exhibited an excess of scrupulosity in trifles which I had not before remarked in him. He spoke in low and subdued tones instead of in his usual high and manly key, sang hymns unweariedly all day long, and on one occasion when walking with me and talking to me seriously of his new-found joy, on my lightly dropping some strong expression savouring of profanity he actually burst into tears. From all this it was clear to me at least that he had undergone some remarkable change, and hopeless myself of being able to share his joy, I resolved if possible to get to the bottom of it.

After his conversion he had been in the habit of calling on me in the evenings with the view of making a convert of me, but all his efforts in this direction proving unavailing, he gradually reconciled himself to talking the matter over philosophically, as it were, and as a piece of experience; and was quite prepared to explain to me as truly as he could, the nature of the curious change which had come over him, and in which I was so anxious if not at first hand then imaginatively or at second hand, to participate.

The first question, then, to which I sought an answer, was whether the personal experience called 'conversion' was due as the Revivalists taught, to the direct action of the Holy Spirit on the open and receptive heart, or not? Now Phrenology like all materialistic philosophies, making as it did all the emotions of the mind to spring directly from the activity of certain portions of the brain, was unable to allow of any supernatural or extraneous influences whatever; and I was anxious therefore to know from my friend whether he could detect in the strange mental experience of his conversion, any foreign element not to be accounted for by the normal activity of the human mind when acted on by a sufficient natural stimulus. Of a keenly analytic turn of mind, he had evidently been pondering this very point, for his reply was prompt and unhesitating. There was nothing supernatural about it whatever, he said, but as far and as truly as he could analyze it, it

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was due merely to the *natural* effect on his better nature, of what he believed to be a fact,—but a fact the profound significance of which, he had only now realized for the first time,—the fact namely, that Jesus Christ the Son of God had actually and literally died for him, for him personally and individually, that he might be saved. That was all. On my venturing to suggest that this explanation was not one that the Revivalists, or indeed the body of Christians generally, would be disposed to accept, he replied that he could not help it, that he had himself undergone the experience, and that he could assure me that the character and quality of the feeling in this change of heart or 'conversion,' were precisely what they would have been had some friend died for him, and that its greater intensity was simply owing to the fact that it was no mere man who had done this for him, but the Son of God Himself. Now this, harmonizing as it did with all my own beliefs, I had no difficulty in accepting; indeed it seemed to me at once the most simple and natural explanation of Christian experience that I had yet heard; an explanation, too, without a trace of metaphysics, scholasticism or supernaturalism in it, and at the time (I was then about nineteen) it made a deep impression on my mind. If then I could only believe that Jesus Christ really did die for me, I thought. What then?

My next concern, accordingly, was to ascertain from my friend what new fact or facts, what new combination or new presentation of them had been made to him, to have engendered in him that new and peculiar form of belief or assent which was previously wanting in him, and which was known by the name of 'faith.' I had already been going over in my own mind the style and substance of the arguments used at these meetings as well as I could, but could think of nothing new that could have been presented to him there, beyond what we had before heard over and over again. My own explanation therefore was that just as the senses, the lower centres, and the higher centres of the brain, if I may use an illustration,

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are inseparable in the ordinary acts of life, and all work together as parts of one organic whole or chain known as the human intelligence, but can each be artificially cut off from the rest, as in hypnotism, with the curious results we all have seen; so in the excitement and fervour, the din and uproar of these meetings, the image of Christ, with his death and resurrection, cut off for the moment as in a dream from its base in the real world, had been so burnt into his mind in all its awfulness and beauty, that it had led his imagination captive, as much so indeed as if it had been enacted in bodily form before him; and further and more important still, that it was the love and gratitude, the self-abnegation and the free expansion of mind and heart that arose naturally on this vision of Christ dying for him, that by their very blessedness, sacredness, and beauty, (the highest emotions of the soul) became of themselves evidence and guarantee for the truth of the doctrine. A natural conclusion, I felt, but one involving a capital fallacy in thought—the fallacy namely, that because the highest emotions of the soul are at once a proof and guarantee that their exercise is the true end of our being, therefore their presence proves the objective truth of any *particular* set of facts, Christian, Mahommedan, Buddhist or other, which for the time being happens to call them forth—a beautiful fallacy I said to myself, but a fallacy nevertheless, and I resolved to put it to him at our next meeting.

Accordingly one Sunday morning on our return from church, as we stood in front of our house talking of these high matters in the falling snow, I ventured to suggest the explanation of his case which I have just given, and to ask him if it were not the true one. He answered I know not what now, and we soon parted, I little thinking of the consequences of my words, for it was not long before they dissolved the spell which had enchanted him, and in the end made shipwreck of his faith. For a week or more I saw nothing of him, and it was not until our next meeting that I learned with a kind of horror the agonies.

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he had undergone, and the mental torment my question had caused him. Unable to think, as he afterwards told me, of any new argument or proof for his faith other than he had always had, racked with doubt in consequence, and more than suspecting that my words were true, he had gone about like one distraught—restless, sleepless, tearless, unable to work, unable to eat, and with a weight like a stone at his heart which nothing would remove. He had kept his misery to himself, and tried in every way to conquer it, by reading his Bible, by avoiding society, by a closer attendance at the services, and by prayer, but all in vain; whipped by his own searching doubts and fears he had walked over the fair earth as over burning marl, alone, and without a home; and his mind was made like unto a wheel. At last one day he chanced to go into the barber's shop, and in his despair laid his state of mind before the barber himself. The old barber whom we have already seen, he of the portentous brow, was in the habit of preaching every Sunday to a little negro flock of his own, and had evidently at some time or other forded the same stream and known its deeper waters, for on hearing my friend's story he at once put his finger on the nature and seat of the malady, and prescribed its cure. 'You are looking too much at yourself and your own doubts,' he said, 'Never mind them, but look at the Cross.' Look at the Cross! He had not thought of that, but the words now came like a new revelation to his torn and distracted heart, and forthwith the stone rolled away from it, and he was at peace. And then at last after keeping away from me so long, he returned to detail the misery he had suffered, and the gulfs and depths he had sounded, weeping with joy as he told me of the happiness he had again found; while I filled with horror at the thought of what I had caused, listened, but with heart dry as summer's dust, my own mind a confused whirlwind of conflicting thoughts and desires; and was unable to speak. And then it was that there came over me with a pregnancy and power that I had not before known, the old feeling of which I have spoken, that there was

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something wanting in me, that I should be forever doomed to walk the blessed earth unblest, and that happiness like his, I should never know. I felt that I never could believe, that I was incapable of belief, and that the Gospel, even were it true, must forever fall on a parched and withered soil from which no living waters spring.

Months passed on without any apparent change in my friend, but as the first excitement of these meetings spent itself, and their fires began to burn low on the hearth, the seeds of doubt which I had implanted in him, and which the good barber had so promptly eradicated, began to grow again, spreading their roots farther and wider until they had overspread the whole field. There was no sudden backsliding, no acute crisis of suffering, no violent alternations of feeling as before, but a gradual shrinking and loss of bloom, as in those autumnal fruits that still cling to their withered stems till the winter's wind shakes them from their frail tenure on the tree. I saw with real sorrow the work going on, but was powerless to stay it, or to give him either comfort or help. He spoke little of himself or his beliefs, avoided the subject rather, but little by little you saw the old world re-asserting its sway.

He reappeared in his old haunts, joined the society of his old comrades, was seen again in the ball-room and in the field, and his voice once more mingled with ours in our joyous evening songs. And when all was over, and a year or two later we sat together in the ball-room resting ourselves awhile and watching the dreamy mazes of the dance before us, I chanced to ask him if he remembered the time when he had put away all these things, and in their stead went about praying and singing hymns, and trying to win souls to God; he was thoughtful for awhile, and then said with a pathetic melancholy that sank deep into my heart, 'If I could believe now as I did then, I should do the same now as I did then.'

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CHAPTER VI.

EVOLUTION NOT TO BE JUMPED.

WITH the little episode just narrated began my interest in the great world of life outside the barren region of mere phrenological speculation, a world which I was now to try and reap in enlarging swathes and circles, and which was to occupy my best thoughts for many years. From Phrenology I had brought with me one doctrine at least in which I really believed, and which had with me all the force and indisputability of an axiom, the doctrine namely, that all the sentiments, passions, emotions and desires of which the human mind was the subject, were due entirely to the direct action of the brain working after its own proper laws, and not to any extraneous cause whatever, Devil or Holy Ghost. But as with the evangelists and revivalists everywhere the opposite doctrine was maintained, and it was everywhere assumed that the particular state of mind known as 'conversion' was due to the direct workings of the Holy Spirit,—an assumption which they seemed to think was tested and proven by the blessed state of mind which accompanied it, and which they imagined naturally enough, could not be the result of any cause less than immediately divine,—it was not surprising that when these two doctrines came into collision, as they had done in my friend's mind, they should in the end, as we have seen, have made shipwreck of his faith. And it was owing to the pain with

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which I saw this process accomplishing itself in him, as well as to the suspicion that there was something wanting in me which made me constitutionally deaf to these emotional appeals, that I began to wonder whether Religion after all might not perhaps still be justified on higher and more philosophical grounds than what I regarded as but the poor though natural illusions of the ignorant and uncultivated. It was while I was revolving this in my mind, that I heard or read somewhere that Butler's Analogy was one of the deepest and most strongly entrenched bulwarks of Religion that had ever been written, and that propped on its many piles like some everlasting city of the sea, Christianity might forever defy the inrolling breakers of scepticism that washed and broke against it in vain. I accordingly got the book, and set to work upon it at once with all attention, and with every faculty of the mind in full strain. It was one of the toughest pieces of reading that I had yet encountered, and taxed my crude powers of speculation to the utmost, but I was determined not to let it go until it had yielded up its secret, or at least such parts of its drift and aim, as bore on my own perplexities. Of its special contents I can now remember little or nothing, for I have not seen it since that time; even its general drift has become dim and shadowy to me in the lapse of years; but I distinctly remember that at the time I thought its arguments acute and subtle rather than deep and convincing, its extenuations and apologies ingenious and laboured rather than direct and natural, and that nowhere in it could I walk with any confidence or sureness of foot. I felt that however well it may have been adapted to meet the arguments of the sceptics of the eighteenth century, who believed in a natural but not a revealed religion, and however conclusively it may have shown that the difficulties of revealed religion were matched and paralleled by the same or at least equal difficulties in Natural Religion, (and this if I remember rightly was its main drift) it did not meet the difficulties of the Nineteenth Century, difficulties which

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were in the very air, and which were all summed up for me in my one favourite doctrine of the absolute dependence of the mind on the molecular action of the brain, with all that this involved. And so, this great oracle having spoken without effect, and his message having proved but the echo from a dry and deserted well rather than a living spring of truth, I threw him aside as unable to give me any help; and with the feeling that all further enquiries in this direction would be unavailing, and hugging to myself my favourite formula all the more tightly, relapsed into my old indifference to the things of religion—an indifference which there was nothing either in my experience or surroundings to disturb. For, as I have said, I had known no miracles, heard no voices, seen no visions; I was conscious of no Devil but my own passions, no Holy Spirit but the promptings of my own better nature; and felt rather than distinctly thought, that any message from the other life that should concern me or other souls, must be for ever blazoned on the high tops of the world for all men to see, and not be torn from tortured texts, or exhumed in tattered fragments of tradition from the dusty sepulchres of the dead.

Religion, therefore, I put aside for the time, and with the Problem of the World thus freed from its enshrouding mysteries and superstitions, as I thought them, and the decks cleared for action, I was now ready with light heart and nothing daunted, and with all the banners of youth and hope floating gaily in the breeze, to take the high seas of speculation, and to advance to the subjugation of the world of thought by the purely intellectual road that lay through the great laws of the World and the Human Mind; consoling myself with the reflection that as Religion after all was only our idea of the Cause of Things and our relation to that Cause, whatever truth there might be in it must disclose itself and be taken in on the way.

But how to set about the conquest of the intellectual world? Where to begin? and how to proceed? These were the questions

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that engaged me. For I had no one to guide me, to tell me what to read or to avoid, and in my choice of books was left entirely to hearsay, to conversation, or to such works as I had seen mentioned in the newspapers. Practically, however, my choice was restricted to the contents of the public library in the town, where I wandered up and down at random, dipping and tasting here and there; and except that in a general way I wanted to know straight off hand all about the laws of the World and of Human Life, not knowing very specially what it was I did want! And yet it was curious to notice with what promptness the mind as if by a kind of instinct, dropped, ignored, or put aside, all that was extraneous to its own but partially conscious aims, or that covered fields of thought for which it was not yet ripe; only such books as lay near enough to me, as it were, to have organic connection with my then stage of development, taking any permanent hold on me. For I was just emerging from Phrenology, and was still absorbed in studying the laws of the individual mind; around this my thoughts revolved in incessant activity, and unless the books I read and the excursions I made into wider fields of thought could help me in this, they fell off my mind again, leaving scarcely a trace behind.

Among authors read by me at this time and who were too advanced for me, the most interesting perhaps, was Buckle, who in his 'History of Civilization' which I had come upon in the library, greatly charmed and impressed me by the rolling vigour of his style, the pomp of his generalizations, and the high confidence with which he stepped along, driving whole ages and nations before him in flocks, and like some great general, disposing of his vast miscellany of fact and inference with consummate ease. I had scarcely opened the book before I became so interested that I could not leave it, and can still remember the pleasure with which I retailed its arguments and conclusions to my friend with the 'boot-jack' when he paid me his usual visit from the country on the following Saturday. And yet in spite of the pleasure it gave me, it had little or no

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influence on the course of my mental evolution, and with the exception of leaving some vague general ideas behind it, was soon forgotten. The reason was that Buckle dealt almost entirely with the laws that regulate the larger movements of societies and nations, with the laws of men in the *mass*, while I was still immersed in the laws of man as an *individual* and in his relation to other men. His arguments and conclusions therefore passed off my mind without leaving a trace behind them, and had all to be taken up again and considered anew at a future stage.

The same result followed the reading of Stuart Mill's metaphysical work on Sir Wm. Hamilton's Philosophy, but for a different reason. Dealing as it did with discussions as to the analysis of our faculties, and their decomposition into, and reconstruction out of simpler states, it exhibited I doubt not with much clearness, what a perception was, what a judgment was, what a cause was, and the like, but I had already had enough of this sort of thing in Phrenology, and what I now wanted to know was not what a judgment, a perception, or a cause was, but what judgments I was to form of this complex and various world, what things I was to perceive in it, and what the causes were of its multiplex and ever-shifting phenomena—quite another matter. The consequence was that this book of Stuart Mill's too proved useless for my present aims, and passed off the mind without in any way affecting the natural evolution of my thought.

More striking still, perhaps, as illustrating how impossible it is for the mind to overleap the limited range of thought in which at any given time it is insulated and entrenched, how impossible it is for it, like a dark lantern, to illuminate anything beyond the focus of its own rays, was the difficulty I had in understanding Carlyle and Emerson. It was some two or three years, perhaps, after Carlyle's address to the Edinburgh students on the occasion of his being made Lord Rector, that the echo of his name reached me in the far interior of Canada;

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and not long after, a copy of the cheap edition of his 'Sartor' chanced to find its way into our public library. I immediately set to work on it with the earnest desire to master its contents, but beyond the autobiographical portions I cannot remember to have really understood a single sentence. The reason was that it dealt, in the difficult parts at least, not so much with the relations in which individual men stand to each other, that is to say with the laws of the individual mind as such, as with the relations of Man to the Universe, to which I had not yet given any thought; Carlyle expressly figuring mankind in that work, as a number of shadowy ghosts emerging from Eternity, and stalking across this Time-shadow of a world, to plunge into the Inane again! He dealt, in a word, with the deep illusions of the world, while I was lost in its ordinary platitudes and superficial appearances. The thought, indeed, that anything could be an illusion, and that things were not what they seemed, had never occurred to me. On the contrary everything to me was most serious and real,—the boys, the girls, the school, the market, the loves, the jealousies, the quarrels, the emulations,—and in a democratic state of opinion where the comings and goings of the artizan were reported in the newspapers with as much seriousness as the movements of royalty itself, each man stood on his own feet as an individual of much consequence in my eyes. And as it would have surprised me much to have been told that men could be lumped together and generalized as 'the herd,' 'the masses,' and the like, and that their actions could be predicted with as much regularity and certainty as those of sheep, so I was still more amazed when I found Carlyle speaking of them as shadows emerging from the Inane, stalking like astonished ghosts across the world of Time, and plunging back into the Inane again. To reach conclusions like these would have required as complete a change in my point of view, as the Copernican Astronomy which regarded the Sun as the centre did, from the old Ptolemaic Astronomy which it displaced; and the gap could no more be spanned from my

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superficial generalizations of human life, than the 'Principia' of Newton could from the elements of Euclid. It required, in a word, a higher calculus of Thought to reach it, and for this I was not yet ready.

It was much the same with Emerson. Not only were his 'Essays' quite beyond my comprehension, but such comparatively simple studies even as his chapter on Napoleon in his 'Representative Men' were quite beyond me, and that, too, at a time when I could read Mill and Buckle with comparative ease. The reason was, that even when he was dealing with those laws of the individual mind which it was my main object to explore, he sank his shafts into strata so deep as to be entirely cut off from the shallow field of my own explorations; and his generalizations and laws, in consequence, having no uniting links with those that I had already reached, were quite unintelligible to me. Like Carlyle, therefore, he too had to be replaced on the shelves again to await a riper time. The truth was that neither my years, my experience of life, nor the conditions of evolution itself, would enable me thus lightly to jump out of my own skin, as it were, without undergoing the common lot of plodding laboriously through all the intervening stages of thought, and I could no more prætermit any one of these stages in normal evolution, than could a chick in its passage from the egg to the full grown fowl. I was entirely immersed, as I have said, in the discovery of the laws of the nature of men in their capacity as individuals, and as was inevitable from my years, in only the most superficial of these; and whether the author into whom I dipped, was one who like Buckle dealt with the laws of men in the mass (rather than as individuals) or like Carlyle with the relations of Man to the Universe (rather than to his fellow-man) or like Emerson with laws so wide and deep as to be out of touch with the superficial web of relations in which my mind dwelt; in all, the result was the same; they were all alike shed off the mind as off a waterproof, and my normal evolution went on undisturbed as before.

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Were there then no books at once so level with my capacity and so suited to my stage of development as to yield me entire satisfaction and delight? Yes; and chief among them, perhaps, was the 'Recreations of a Country Parson' which had recently fallen into my hands, and which gave me precisely the grade and stage of platitude I required. For I had arrived at just that point of mental evolution where the range and illustration usual in sermons of the better quality taxed my intellectual grasp to the utmost, and completely filled up the measure of my intellectual powers. The insight displayed may be described as a kind of insight lying somewhere midway in depth between the ordinary common sense of the man of the world, and that deep wisdom of life, that deep knowledge of the laws of the human mind which at once explains and illuminates vast tracts of human action, and which is so marked in men like Bacon, Emerson, and Shakspeare; a kind of insight that may be sufficiently seen in the ordinary method of the popular preacher, who taking some old scriptural character, some Nicodemus or Zacchaeus perhaps, will make the going to Christ by night of the one, and the climbing up a tree of the other, the occasion for endless subtleties and distinctions, and for the most ingenious dissertations on human nature and action; dissertations which in those days when every thread of connexion among human things, however superficial, was essential to the web of laws and principles I was weaving for myself, quite charmed and delighted me. Now of this class of teacher, Henry Ward Beecher the great New York preacher was the supreme type; and for years his printed sermons were the main source of my instruction and delight. His range and variety in all that kind of observation and subtlety of which I have just spoken; his width of sympathy; his natural and spontaneous pathos; the wealth of illustration and metaphor with which his sermons were adorned, and which were drawn chiefly from natural objects, from his orchard, his farm, his

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garden, as well as from machinery and from all kinds of natural processes; his naturalism and absence of theological bias; his knowledge of average men and their ways of looking at things; in a word his general fertility of thought, filling up as it did the full horizon of my mind, and running over and beyond it on all sides, so that wherever I looked he had been there before me,—all this delighted and enchanted me, and made him for some years my ideal of intellectual greatness; and I looked forward to the Saturdays on which his weekly sermon reached me, with longing and a pure joy.

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CHAPTER VII.

A CHANGE OF METHOD.

IT would almost seem from the foregoing chapter that in setting out to discover the great laws of the world and of human life, I had purposed making books my chief if not my sole mainstay; and that even when mistaken in the choice of them, taking up now one and now another at random and without order or sequence—now swallowed up in a Brobdignagdian hat much too large for me and which I had to lay aside again, as was the case with Buckle, Emerson, and Carlyle; now provided by Beecher, the 'Country Parson,' and others with a better and more suitable fit—still it was on the right books, if I could only come across them, that I placed my main reliance. Now at no period of my life was this true, not even at the time when I thought Combe's Phrenology the last and only Apocalypse; on the contrary I had always trusted for my beliefs (as distinct from my mere opinions) to first-hand observation and inspection of things themselves, and only in a secondary way to books. These I had always read rather as furnishing points of suggestion to be accepted or rejected as experience and observation should determine, than as Scriptures to be received on authority alone; and had used rather as sign-boards to direct me to the point of observation, than as guide-books to tell me beforehand what I should see when I got there. But while thus making observation and not books my mainstay in the task I had before me, it was curious

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that though still believing in Phrenology, theoretically at least, I should quite insensibly and unconsciously have slipped away from its old method of the tape and the calipers; and that not only the kind of things I now observed, but my method of interpreting them, had undergone a complete change. Instead of looking as formerly merely at the configuration of the head and the general character of the temperament, I now tried to take in as far as possible the whole circumstance and environment of men; instead of interpreting their actions and motives by a comparison of the relative size and prominence of the organs on their skulls, I now looked within myself, into my own mind (after putting myself as it were in their place) for the law and cause of their procedure. That is to say, instead of trying to explain the complex web of human nature and action by any *outside* balancing or combination of faculties, any addition or subtraction of them; I now took as my standpoint of interpretation my own *inner* consciousness, and the relations and connexions I found existing there between its various states—its opinions, passions, sentiments, and desires. And as this change of method was perhaps the most important feature in my mental evolution up to the time of which I am writing, all the more so because it was so unconscious; and as a similar change of method had to be undergone at each successive plane or stage of my mental evolution before I could make any further advance, it is important that I should furnish the reader at this point with some rough general outline at least, of its nature and import. The first trace of this change had already shown itself when I was still in the very heyday of phrenological enthusiasm. It was about a year after my return from the University, when tired of doing nothing, and still uncertain as to the profession I should choose, I seized the chance that happened to offer of entering the office of one of the great engineering works in the town, and which then, as now, was one of the largest establishments of the kind in the whole Dominion. With little to do, and with much spare time on my hands, I was with rare indulgence allowed to loiter about the work-shops by the hour

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together, talking to the men as they went on with their work, and discussing with those of them who were interested, such subjects as phrenology, literature, poetry, and the various religious and philosophical questions to which the great Revival I have already described had given a new life. In the course of these conversations, and of my goings in and out among the men, I naturally saw and heard much of the relations existing between them and the foremen of the different shops, relations which were nearly always strained, and very generally bordering on a state of open antagonism. In some shops the men, wild, insubordinate, and as difficult to manage as Mexican mustangs, were constantly getting out of hand; work was in consequence neglected, and things going from bad to worse there was nothing for it but to try what a change of foreman would do in the way of restoring discipline. Accordingly when a fresh man was appointed, speculation was rife as to the chances of his success, and all were eager and interested in casting his horoscope. I usually gave my opinion like the rest, and on two or three of these occasions was so fortunate as to make some happy predictions both as to the length of time the new men were likely to retain their situations, and as to the special causes which would ultimately eventuate in their downfall. These forecasts I communicated at the time to the confidential clerk, who had already been much impressed by my knowledge of phrenology and by the accuracy with which, as he expressed it, I had read his character; and by him they were passed on to the heads of the firm; so that from this time onwards, whenever a new foreman was wanted, it was customary for them to take me into their counsels, on the understanding that while they were to judge of the technical qualifications of those who applied, I was to give my opinion on their special qualifications to manage the men. Accordingly on the morning of the day when the applicants were expected to arrive, some of them from distant parts of the Dominion, a note would be left on my desk by one of the firm, informing me that a certain number

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were expected during the course of the day, and that it would be necessary for me to keep close to the office to avoid missing any of them; and asking me at the same time to 'look them over carefully.' As I was not more than eighteen or nineteen years of age at the time, I naturally entered into the humour of a situation in which I was to sit in judgment on bearded men, with much gusto and sense of fun. Presently the trains bearing the applicants would begin to arrive from different parts of the country, and the men would drop into the office one after another—a miscellaneous assortment truly, of old and young, rough and smooth, tidy and unkempt, fierce and gentle, open and reserved—and would take their seats by the stove in the ante-room where I sat writing, to await their audience with the principals. This was my opportunity, and walking over from my desk to where they were sitting, I would take up the poker with the pretence of stirring up the fire, as an excuse for starting a conversation with them. Beginning with the weather or other indifferent matter, I would gradually learn from them where they had been, the positions they had held, the experience they had had in the management of men, and the like, and in the course of the conversation, keeping clearly before my eye the characteristics and peculiarities of temper and disposition of each of the men over whom they were to rule, had to make up my mind as to whether they were likely to succeed or no. When they had all come and gone, and I had heard all they had to say, my report was sent in, and after being considered in connexion with their other purely technical qualifications, the selection was made in due form.

Now in forming my judgment in these instances, I had really renounced the old phrenological method which had once been my main reliance in estimating character and capacity, and had adopted a new one founded on intuitive perceptions drawn from within myself,—founded that is to say not on the size and prominence of the organs on the cranium, nor even on this taken into consideration with the general character of the

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temperament, but on the *tout ensemble* of the personality—on manner, appearance, expression, temperament, opinion, physiognomy, gait, and the hundred and one lesser indications which on account of their diversity can never be combined under any *external* principle, but which can derive their sense and meaning only from some *inner* connexion of thought and feeling which is only to be got at through a knowledge of your own mind. In other words my method of arriving at a knowledge of the human mind had changed from an external to an internal interpretation; from combinations existing outside of the mind, to combinations within it. It is true that I still glanced at the old phrenological organs in passing, but like those preachers who still refer to texts of Scripture long after they have lost for them their original divine authority, it was more as a matter of old habit, than as placing any real dependence on them.

Now if this instinctive change of method was so marked when I was still immersed in the individual, it became still more so when I had ceased to take my old interest in the mere peculiarities of mind or character of any one individual man, and was on the look-out rather for the great laws of the World and of the Human Mind. It was a true instinct which impelled me to this change, and to justify it I shall now endeavour to show that neither Phrenology (even if true) nor yet Metaphysics and Psychology, although all of them dealing with the mind, are by their own methods able to discover a *law* of the mind. Should I succeed in doing this satisfactorily, it will throw much light on the later stages of my mental growth and evolution;—but first to explain precisely what it is I mean by a 'law of the human mind.'

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CHAPTER VIII.

A LAW OF THE MIND—WHAT IS IT?

THOSE of my readers who have done me the honour to read my book on 'Civilization and Progress' will perhaps remember that in seeking for some new method of interpreting the great movements of civilization, I took my stand (after throwing out successively History, Metaphysics, Psychology and Physical Science, as unable to give me what I wanted) on what I called the Laws of the Human Mind; and that in doing so I at the same time announced that whatever new truths, if any, should chance to come to the surface in the course of the work, should in all fairness be credited to this new method of interpretation rather than to myself. It was with some surprise therefore, that after having explained in various ways and as clearly as I could, what I meant, I was told by two of our well-known thinkers—the one a scientific writer of wide culture and broad and catholic sympathies, the other a metaphysician of the purest water—that although agreeing with many of the results at which I had arrived, they still felt themselves unable to grasp clearly what it was I specially meant by a law of the human mind; and that, too, although nearly the whole of the work was but commentary, illustration, and variation on a few of these laws. Now this inability of theirs was I doubt not partly due to my not having made myself sufficiently clear, but I am convinced that it was in a large measure owing to the fact that neither the

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Physical Sciences, nor yet the Metaphysics or Psychology of which these men were the accredited representatives, can by their own methods reach to what I have called a law of the human mind, and on which I have made so much to depend. But of this anon; for the present, not to anticipate but to keep to the stage of evolution I had then reached, it is necessary that I should now show why it was that Phrenology, even if true, could not discover those laws of the mind of which I was in search.

To make clear then what it is I mean by a law of the human mind, it will be best for my present purpose, perhaps, to compare it with a law of physical Nature, which merely expresses the *tendency* things have to unite or divide, to separate or come together, so that when one appears the other may be predicted to follow; unless, indeed, some other law or tendency interferes to prevent it. It always therefore expresses a movement between *two* things, either one that shall bring them together if they are separated, or separate them if they are together, either a movement, that is, of attraction or a movement of repulsion. The law of gravitation, for example, expresses the tendency which all bodies in the mass have to approximate to each other, the law of chemical affinity, the tendency which their particles have to do the same, and so with all other physical laws; so that in thinking of a law of Nature you can always roughly figure it as made up of *two points with a line uniting them*, whereby when one point is known the other may be predicted. It is clear therefore that the greater number of points which you can connect by such lines of relation, the greater will be your knowledge of the laws of Nature, the greater your power of predicting that when any one thing is present, some other thing will follow. Now precisely this, and nothing more, is what I mean when I speak of a law of the human mind. The mind may be said to be made up of a number of powers, sentiments, propensities, passions, and the like, to which such names have been given as love, revenge, reverence, lust, love of life, memory, imagination,

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conscience, hope, etc., names which correspond to definite feelings and affections, and which are understood by all men. Now these faculties and powers are all bound together by invisible threads of relation into that concrete unity which is known as the human mind. And as each of these feelings is a definite affection of the mind, and has a distinct, independent, and conscious existence of its own, so that however often or seldom it is aroused, when it does arise it is always recognized as the same; the laws of the mind are simply the different lines of connexion that can be drawn between any one of these feelings and the rest, so that when any one feeling arises in the mind, others or another may be predicted to follow it, or (as there are laws of repulsion as well as of attraction) to be extinguished or driven out by it. This, in a word, is what I mean by a law of the human mind, and it is evident that if we were to represent these various sentiments, propensities, and powers, as so many spots around the circumference of a globe, the greater number of lines we could draw uniting each of these with the rest, the greater would be the number of laws of human nature we perceived, and the greater the number of actions we could predict. These laws would of course have every degree of value according to their range and depth, and to the number of apparently unrelated sentiments and actions which they would explain; from the ordinary platitude which may be figured as a connexion between points lying so close together that no one could miss them; to the better order of lecture and pulpit exposition connecting points more remote from each other, and where the line must pass some distance beneath the surface; till we come to those great underlying laws which connect the most widely sundered thoughts and sentiments, and which covering and explaining as they do vast fields of human life, may be represented by lines that have to run through great tracts of underground territory in order to connect zones and belts of thought and feeling that seem separated by entire hemispheres.

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And now with this conception of what a law of the human mind is, we are in a position to see why it was that insensibly and almost unconsciously I had renounced Phrenology as a method of arriving at the laws of the mind, long before I had theoretically discarded it, and why it is that Metaphysics also although dealing with the mind, should give us no insight into those laws of the mind by which alone we can anticipate or predict the actions of men. For in Phrenology, and metaphorically speaking in Metaphysics also, the faculties of the mind may be figured as lying side by side on the surface of the cranium, like a number of billiard balls large and small on a table; they are entirely unrelated to each other by any lines of internal connexion, their only relations being those of merely external contact, so that if they should happen to roll against each other, as, for example, if so much hope should come against so much caution, so much imagination against so much fear, so much reverence against so much lust, the activity or strength of the faculties in question, and therefore of the resulting action, would to that extent be fortified, diluted, or neutralized, as the case might be; much in the same way as if so much water had been added to one's spirit, or sugar to one's tea. But this union of the mental elements, although superficially it looks as if it were a relation between *two* things, is really only the diluting or strengthening of *one*. It is not a *combination* of two elements, such as in chemistry out of oxygen and hydrogen would give us water (a new thing that can be predicted to appear), but is a *mixture* or solution rather, like that which out of oxygen and nitrogen produces air (not a new thing, but only a diluted oxygen), or out of salt and water gives us only salt and water, or diluted salt. It furnishes us therefore with only one pole or term of a relation, and not with the two which as we have seen are necessary to constitute either a law of Nature or a law of the human mind. In a word, it is not a relation whereby when one term is known, another and unknown one can be predicted, or a process

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whereby when you put in one thing an entirely new thing comes out, but a process rather in which you bring out only what you have already put in. There is therefore no addition to knowledge. For just as from a mixture of spirit and water you get only a diluted spirit, so from a Phrenological or Metaphysical mixture of prudence or caution with imagination or hope, you can only get a chastened imagination, or a tempered hope. With a true law of the mind it is just the opposite, as for example when you bring suspicion into relation with love, you produce jealousy—quite a new thing, and one you will observe that could never be surmised or predicted by any manipulation of the two things on a phrenological or metaphysical chart, but only by looking into our own minds. A phrenological or metaphysical arrangement of the faculties therefore, even if true, could give us no insight into the laws of the human mind.

That this is so, may be still further seen if we remember that in the idea of a law of the mind, as of a law of physical Nature, a sequence is always involved, a relation of antecedent and consequent, a movement in Time between one point and another, between one state of feeling and another, so that due regard being had to circumstances, you can predict the feeling that will follow out of the existent one. In phrenological and metaphysical relations on the contrary, where the contents of one feeling are merely mingled with those of another, strengthening or diluting it as the case may be, the united two count only as one term of the relation necessary to constitute a law, and in the absence of the second term, the emotion or mental state which will next arise cannot, it is evident, be known. For the feelings and emotions of the mind are not like a row of sentry-boxes between which thought when once aroused, will of itself march mechanically first to the one next it, then on to the next again, and so on till it has completed the entire circuit. On the contrary, like forked lightning it takes the most unexpected cuts and turns, forwards

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and backwards, zigzag, crossways, and in all directions from one to the other; now accumulating at fixed points like electricity, anon discharging itself and heaping itself up on its opposite, in a manner to which neither Metaphysics nor Phrenology can give us any clue. The relative natural strengths of the various passions, although affecting the *amount* of feeling evolved at any given point, can tell us nothing about the *line of direction* that thought will take as it cuts across the feelings. This can be known only from within our own minds, *i.e.* from a knowledge of the laws of the mind. And it is just the *relation* between one emotion and another, one sentiment and another, whereby when one is given the other may be predicted, that constitutes a law of the mind. To see this knowledge of the laws of the mind exemplified on the grand scale, you have only to take down the play of Othello, and mark the series of effects on the broad unsuspecting mind of the Moor, of the drop of poisoned suspicion instilled into it by Iago. First or last, it is true, the jealousy aroused does indeed travel the full round of the mind, and draw in one after another all or nearly all of the leading passions and desires; but it does not touch each of these keys in turn one after another in any mechanical way as a piano-tuner might do, or in any sequence that could be determined by estimating the original strengths of the various passions involved (though this too is a factor in the completed result), but flies backwards and forwards among the keys after the manner of the great *virtuoso*, and in an order that depends on the secret *connexions* between the various passions, and can be known only by the mind itself when observing the sequences and connexions of its own states. The sudden turns which the passion takes in the play, its rapid transitions from one extreme to another, its movement first from suspicion to doubt, then from doubt to indignation, and from indignation back again to trust; the return again of doubt, and the agony of despair which accompanies it, followed by the brutal assault on Iago in whom the

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Moor still believes; then the sense of uncertainty deepening into the probability of guilt, the vows of vengeance, and the ascent of passion to a height where for a moment it balances itself on calm extended wing, circling around itself like an eagle before its swoop; the return again of doubt as to Desdemona's real guilt, but on the proof of it, revenge fixed and deep, which in its recoil, however, still continues to alternate and rock itself amid momentary and conflicting gusts of love, of pathos, of anger, of pity; till hardening itself again it settles finally into a fixed frenzy of revenge which passing on to action swallows up its victim, ending at last in despair and death; and all this following, as it does, the deep laws of the human mind so closely, that with insight enough, and due allowance being made for the attendant circumstances, each movement might in a manner be seen to be the effect of all that preceded, and the cause of all that followed it. And in fine, in all this it is evident that this jagged, uncertain, and zigzag line of passion, leaping like living fire from peak to peak, could never be determined by any external phrenological or metaphysical compounding of suspicion, fear, jealousy, pity, pathos, or revenge, but only from those internal connexions or laws which the mind discovers by looking into itself.

The same conclusions will be strengthened if we take a still more general survey of the field. In a broad and general way it may be affirmed that the mind of man stands up against the circumstances that would subdue it, as the body of man keeps its erect posture against the forces of Nature that would bring it to the ground; and that the play of thought and emotion that is set up in the mind when anything occurs to disturb its equanimity, is analagous to the action of the muscles of the body when anything occurs to upset the balance. And as the object of the action of the muscles is to restore the *bodily* equilibrium, so the object of the play of thought and passion is to bring the *mind* back to its original equanimity; as is well seen in the play of Othello to which we

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have just referred, where it is evident that the whole struggle in the mind of the Moor,—his violent upheavals and the to-and-fro-conflicting outbursts of passion,—is to get back to his old composure, to 'that sweet sleep which he owed yesterday,' even although that sleep could in the nature of the case be none other than the sleep of death. And one may go still farther and affirm that just as the slightest deflection of the trunk may in certain positions of the body, throw into action muscles so remote even as those of the foot or heel before it can be brought back to the perpendicular; or, to vary the metaphor, just as in an orchestral symphony the spirit and harmony of the whole can perhaps only be maintained by the recurrent intrusion from the rear into the stream of sound, of some deep bassoon with its perplexed and troubled note; so the smallest seed of suspicion dropped into the mind, may set in motion thoughts and passions the most distant and apparently unrelated, before its equilibrium can be restored. Nor is this all. For just as the movements of the muscles necessary to restore the body to its erect posture, follow one another according to laws of correlation fixed deep in the spinal cord; and the order, combination, and sequence of instruments in an orchestra are determined by the deep laws of harmony in the composer's mind; so the movements of thought and passion which must intervene before tranquillity can be restored to the distracted mind, are determined by laws that lie deep in the mind itself. The inference therefore is obvious;—that just as the muscles of the body can be separated, numbered, and set down in position in an anatomical chart, and yet the particular muscles that would have to be put in motion to restore the balance after any departure from the equilibrium, could never by reason of their complexity (as can be seen in cases of *locomotor ataxia*) be known by any outward balancing of their sizes, positions, or functions, but only by the co-ordination of centres of the greatest delicacy and poise, in the spinal cord,—co-ordinations which if the cord were conscious and could think, could be written out as *laws* of

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muscular action; so in the same way you may have accurately analyzed, numbered, and set down in your chart of the mind, phrenological or other, all the faculties, passions, and sentiments of the mind in their relative sizes and strengths, and yet the way in which they would follow and relate themselves to each other in the face of any complex combination of circumstances from without tending to upset the mind's tranquillity (in other words the laws of the mind they would follow), could never be determined from *without*, by any observation however complete and accurate of their relative sizes or strengths, but only from *within*, by observing their sequences and connexions in our own minds.

And now if by means of these various illustrations and analogies I have succeeded in making clear to the reader what it is I mean by the laws of the human mind, and how we are to set about discovering them, he will at once perceive how it was that insensibly and unconsciously, as I have said, I had practically abandoned the old method of Phrenology long before I had theoretically discarded its philosophical basis. He will see too that my only alternative after rejecting the *outside* method of Phrenology was, after putting myself in the place as it were of the person or persons whose conduct or action I wished to explain or account for, to search in my own mind for the relations and connexions of thought and feeling that would be likely (due allowance being made for circumstances) to produce the same result in myself; and if, besides, I found that the same principles seemed adequate to explain the like conduct or action in other men under similar circumstances, I should consider that I had discovered not only the true explanation of the particular conduct or action in question, but a true law of the human mind as well. Instead therefore of looking at the bumps on the head or forehead for the explanation of the actions of particular individuals, or at their relations on the chart for the laws of the human mind in general, my method was to take as my *standpoint of interpretation* my own mind with the sequences

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and relations between the thoughts, sentiments, and passions which I found there; and as my *method of investigation* the minute and careful observation and study of the facts themselves. That is to say, internal observation was my standpoint of interpretation, external observation my means of investigation merely.

How this method was abandoned for a time when I came to the great Problem of the World as distinct from the laws of the Human Mind, and how I was obliged to take it up again before I could advance a step, will be seen in future chapters as the course of this evolution proceeds.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE BREAKDOWN OF PHRENOLOGY.

WHILE I was thus silently and unconsciously drifting from my old moorings, and was deserting Phrenology as unable by its method to give me any further help, the comrades who had set out with me and accompanied me thus far on my way, still remained loyal to their old allegiance, and refusing to move, continued contentedly sitting around the old embers that had warmed and comforted them so long. The younger of the two, my friend of the 'Revival' episode, although active, enquiring, and full of intellectual energy, was naturally averse to opening his eyes too widely to the flaws of a system which so flattered his own personal pretensions, and which by the large powers of Causality it endowed him with, gave him so much distinction and radiance in his own imagination; while the elder, he of the 'Boot-jack,' had so long nourished his soul on it in solitude, that he was now too old to change; and with the affection of some old Arab of the desert for the good camel that had served him so well, striking his spear into the earth, was prepared to take up his everlasting rest beside it. Accordingly I had to leave them behind, and go forward alone; but I cannot remember that my movements gave them the least curiosity or concern. For I was but modestly endowed as I have said, with that sovereign organ or 'bump' of Causality which was so conspicuous in the heads of

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both these friends; and the consequence was that when I returned to them from my various excursions, bringing with me the gleanings of my own observation and reflection—and which consisted for the most part of such lighter laws and threads of connexion as served to stitch together those thoughts and feelings which Phrenology had left isolated and unrelated, —it was rather with a kind of mild surprise than with any deeper interest in my speculations, that they regarded me;— as much as to say, 'Is it really possible that *you* could have discovered this?' So strong a pre-conception indeed had they formed of my inability to trace the relations of cause and effect from the mere configuration of my head, that to escape allowing me this capacity they were willing to credit me with the possession of any number of subsidiary or auxiliary faculties and powers; my young friend being disposed to attribute my successes chiefly to a power of observation which he thought he saw in me, and of which 'bump' indeed, he allowed that I had a sufficiency; while my old friend of the 'Boot-jack' was inclined rather to refer them to what he was pleased to call my 'nervous temperament,' and which you were to figure as a kind of machine which made more revolutions a minute than was usual, and so made up in velocity for what it lost in power! Now I must confess that this indisposition of theirs to give me credit for the work I was doing, sincere doubtless as it was, for a time piqued my pride and vanity not a little; the more so as I flattered myself that by my new method I was reducing large tracts of the more superficial aspects of life and nature under their true laws and causes, while they in my judgment were wasting their time revolving round the same old theme and dreaming over the excellence of their own powers. I soon became accustomed to this attitude of theirs however, and despairing of altering it, ceased after a time to take further notice of it, but went on my own way unheeding.

Meanwhile having thrown off the methods of Phrenology, and so blown away the haze with which affection and enthusiasm

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had for a time invested it, I was enabled to see in greater sharpness of outline the flaws and gaps in its structure; and all the old unresolved cases which when my enthusiasm was at its height had been silently hidden away as in a box, under lock and key, now revived in all their force. But besides these old instances, new ones were constantly arising in which the gaps between the character and the cranium were so wide, that not all the ingenuity of my friend of the 'Boot-jack' could bridge them, not even his ever ready extenuations and distinctions could be stretched so as to cover them without cracking. And yet so gradual is the process of uncoiling oneself from the folds of a belief which one has once deeply entertained, that my incredulity for some time was kept within very definite limits. For, so far, I had never doubted that these organs of the Phrenologists were the true and scientific divisions of the human mind, and that such so-called intellectual faculties as Observation, Causality, Comparison, Language, and the rest, were quite distinct and independent powers. What I doubted was merely whether these faculties had been assigned in all instances to their proper positions on the cranium. But I was now to see that not only were they not true divisions of the mind at all, but that they could not have distinct and independent existences of their own; and therefore that they could not have occupied the positions assigned them.

Not having been well for some time I had gone to New York for a course of sea-bathing, when as I sauntered along the street one afternoon I chanced to find my way into Barnum's museum; and there among other wonders and surprises I found that in a little ante-room at the top of the main staircase, a Phrenologist had opened his sanctum, and was prepared to furnish the public with the fullest particulars on all points of ability or character, oral or written. Prompted mainly by curiosity I sat down on his chair to have my head manipulated, and in the course of the conversation that ensued, was interested to learn from him that he had discovered and developed an entirely new system, in

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which while some new organs were added, many of the old ones had changed their positions, and not a few had been discarded altogether! Of the particulars of this new system, I have now but a most imperfect recollection, but such a sudden shifting and transformation of the very foundations of the science, was sufficient in my sceptical humour to set me considering whether, after all, these intellectual faculties about which my friends were so enthusiastic, had really any independent existence at all; and the question once raised, it was not long before I found that under analysis they nearly all melted away into mere forms of other sympathies, affections, and desires; and so as independent entities had no existence. If, therefore, I should ask the reader to follow me in this demonstration, it is not because I feel it necessary to resurrect for dissection an old and exploded system like Phrenology, but because the subject itself has an importance far beyond the special speculations out of which it grew, and has most important bearings, as we shall see, even on the latest and most developed forms of Modern Scientific Psychology.

In Phrenology as I have said, the various faculties, sentiments, and propensities of the mind lie around the circumference of the cranium like a number of billiard balls great or small on a table, each being as separate and distinct from the rest as if it were an Emperor in its own right. And not only was each individual faculty separate and distinct from the rest, so that it might be large while they were small or *vice versâ*, but each of the *groups* of faculties—the intellectual, the moral, the æsthetic, the animal,—was equally distinct and independent of its neighbours. But what I wish specially to note here is that the intellectual group on the forehead, consisting as it did of Observation, Memory, Causality, Comparison, Language, and the rest, was entirely cut off from all connexion with the sentiments, affections, and propensities which lay on the top, sides, and back of the head respectively. Now on taking up Causality, the first organ to which I happened to direct my

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attention, and in thinking over what was involved in the discovery of the law or cause of any circumstance or set of facts in the natural world, I at once perceived that in essence it depended mainly on the breadth and subtlety, the minuteness and accuracy of our *observation* of the sequence and connexion of things; and that then the law or cause, which was but the element common to all the facts, could be skimmed off them by a process of abstraction or generalization as formal and mechanical as that by which the cream is separated from the milk. That is to say, the *essence* of Causality lay in the power of observation, and its *form* only, in the process of generalization or abstraction. But as the Phrenologists had already a separate organ of Observation to which they had assigned a distinct place among the other intellectual powers, the consequence was that you had two organs practically performing one and the same function—which was absurd. But when on going still farther back, I asked myself on what this power of observation itself in turn depended, I saw that it depended on the number, complexity, and fineness of our affinities, sympathies, and points of sensibility; or in other words on Feeling. For whether your power of observation be confined to Man or Nature, to Society or the Individual, to Politics or Trade, to Animals or Men, to Public Opinion, Dress, Form, Feature, or Manners; or whether it include or embrace them all; it will be found (the mere bodily eyesight being supposed to be common to all) to be always set in motion by, and to have its roots deep down either in sympathy, affection, desire, or in your natural affinity with the class of objects observed;—whether it be the desire which gives the fox his eye for the goose, the thief for the money-chest, the cabman for his fare, the rook for the pigeon, the politician for a vote, the alderman for respectability and signs of solvency, the practical man for a new opening or investment, or mode of transport or communication, the scientist for a new bacillus or cell, the dramatist and novelist for character, situation, or plot, the poet and artist for beauty in form or colour, in

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landscape or in human life. That is to say, your power of observation will depend either on such low and selfish *stimuli* as the love of money or of power, on pride, vanity, or self-love; on such mixed and neutral impulses as those of enterprise, ambition, distinction, emulation; or on such high and noble loves as those of beauty, goodness, or truth. The greatest all-round observer therefore will be he who like Shakspeare has the greatest number, complexity, and fineness of points of sympathy, affection, and sensibility; or in other words, the greatest variety, range, height, and delicacy of feeling. But these feelings—moral, sentimental, æsthetic, animal,—are placed by the Phrenologists as I have said, in groups by themselves, distinct and separate from the intellectual powers. If Causality, therefore, is practically only another name for breadth and subtlety, range and accuracy of observation; and observation has its root deep down in the sympathies, sentiments, and affinities by which it is prompted and out of which it springs; it is evident that Causality should have its seat among the Feelings rather than among the Intellectual Powers. Either way therefore, it is an illusion. For either it is only a form of Observation, in which case you have two distinct organs performing practically the same function; or it has its root in the impulses, sentiments, and desires, in which case it should have had its place among the feelings, and not among those intellectual powers—such for example as the various kinds of memory—which can have in a great measure, a distinct and independent existence of their own.

The Reader will readily imagine the sense of triumph with which I returned to retail the above arguments to those comrades who had so long ignored my speculations on the ground of my deficiency in that very organ of Causality which had now broken in my hands;—and the surprise with which they received them. My young friend was palpably impressed by them, but the elder, he of the 'boot-jack,' after listening, considering for a while, and finding himself unable to stretch his ingenuity enough

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to cover them, turned over on his side again; and some months later on my return from the University to which I had gone a second time, I found him still sitting unchanged beside the old camp fire. He was joined to his idols, and I let him alone; and during the short time that I was to be with him before I left home for England, the subject was never again discussed between us.

But it was not only Causality as a separate and independent entity that melted away under analysis; all the higher intellectual powers shared the same fate. Take Language, for example, which is placed by the Phrenologists as a separate faculty among the other intellectual powers. Now as the mere names of things may be assumed as practically common to all educated and cultured people, it is evident that the web and pattern into which words shall be woven in expressing our thoughts, will depend not on the mere knowledge of words as such, but on the number of things that make the same impression on our sensibilities, and which therefore can be used as words or images by which to paint out our meaning; and this again will depend on the number, complexity, and fineness of our points of affinity, sympathy, and sensibility; so that whether your language shall be hard, barren, constrained, and suggestive of nothing beyond the most gross and tangible aspect of your thought; or on the other hand shall be rich, various, and running over with subtle allusions which shall bring out its finest shading, glancing and sparkling from it as from the facets of a gem; will depend not on your knowledge of words as such, not on your mere power of language as such, but on the richness, fineness and complexity of your sympathies and sensibilities; in a word, on Feeling. Language therefore, like Causality and Observation, can have no independent intellectual existence of its own, but like them, has its roots deep down among the sympathies, feelings, and moral affinities.

The same result would follow on an analysis of the organ of Comparison, the organ which discovers likenesses, and gives to those endowed with it the power of analogy, of metaphor, of

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illustration. For either the objects which we compare have an external likeness, or they make an identical impression on our sensibilities. In the first case the power of analogy will depend on our power of retaining in our mind the exact likeness of things, that is to say, on the memory of forms,—an organ which has a separate place assigned it among the intellectual faculties; in the second case it will depend like the others, on the number, complexity, and fineness of our points of sensibility, that is to say on Feeling, and can have no place therefore among the intellectual faculties. But enough I trust has been said to show that the higher qualities of the intellect have their core and root deep down among the feelings, and depend for their fullness or poverty on the richness, fineness, and complexity of these feelings; and that any system therefore that would divorce Intellect from Feeling by putting them into separate categories, as if they ground out their special products independently of each other, is convicted of shallowness, superficiality, and absurdity.

But if further proof were wanting that the higher qualities of intellect have their roots in the deeper regions of the mind, and not in any mere overgrown organ, it may be seen in such well-known facts as that the great rhymesters and *improvisatori* are not the great poets; the lightning calculators, not the great mathematicians; those best endowed with physical eyesight, not the great observers; the great memorists of form, not the great painters; or of tune, the great composers.

So fell Phrenology, but from its wreck and break-down one real and positive result had emerged, a relation namely, between two separate and apparently unrelated facts of our nature, between Thought and Feeling, between Intellect and the emotional sympathies. But although I saw this implicitly, I had neither the boldness nor the clearness at the time, to formulate it in a definite principle; and being soon afterwards drawn away from the subject by the current of my thoughts having turned to the larger problem of the World, it was not

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until two or three years had elapsed that I found it had been formulated by Carlyle in his well-known doctrine that 'the Intellectual and the Moral are one;' and that I discovered that on this single principle as basis, the whole series of his historical, literary, and biographical portraits without exception—his Burns, Johnson, Voltaire, Schiller, Scott, Goethe, Mirabeau, Sterling, Frederick, Cromwell and the rest—were avowedly and consciously constructed. With what avidity I seized this doctrine when once I found that another mind had already seen it and given it expression; and how I went about painting with it until I began to see that it would have to be more carefully defined before it could be available for general use, and must be united with other laws equally important before it could explain the nature of any given individual mind—all this will be seen more fully in a subsequent chapter.

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CHAPTER X.

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE.

IN this break-up of Phrenology which had thus given way beneath me, I was again left drifting on the open sea of speculation, far from sight of land. For I was still fully immersed in the discovery of the laws of the individual mind, and although on the right track, had not yet attained to any sufficient insight into them to modify my views of Life as a whole. As for the laws of the Universe, or of the world of Nature, they were still beyond my range of speculation. Of Laplace's theory of the formation of the Universe, and of how suns were condensed from diffused nebulae, planets from suns, and satellites from planets, I had not yet even heard; nor had I as yet the least interest in the subject; it was too wide, too vague, and had too little of human life in it to attract me. It was the same, too, with Spencer's Philosophy of Evolution, and with Darwin's explanation of the evolution of plants and animals, by the process of 'spontaneous variation,' 'natural selection,' and the 'survival of the fittest;' neither of which I had yet read. The consequence was that having arrived at no unity either in my view of the World or of the Human Mind, I had no new basis for a change in my views of Religion, which indeed had slept undisturbed from the days when Butler's Analogy failed to wean me from that passive attitude of sceptical indifference engendered in me by the phrenological

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doctrine of the dependence of the emotions and activities of the mind, on states of the brain.

Still, although land was nowhere in sight, either in the form of a Philosophy of Nature or a Theory of Religion, I was not as I have said without a rudder of my own with which to direct my course. For underneath the old shell and husk of Phrenology, whose methods I had now entirely cast off, the new method which I have already described had taken firm and abiding root. This method, to repeat it again, consisted in taking as my standpoint for the interpretation of human life, the laws of the mind which I discovered in myself, that is to say, those fixed connexions between its various sentiments, emotions, and desires, whereby when any one was given, some other could be predicted to follow or attend it; and going out into the world with these laws, to seek to enforce, modify, or give greater clearness to them, as the case might be, by observing the extent to which they held true of other minds. In this way I gradually wove for myself a web of laws of the mind, which however superficial they might be at first, had as prime virtue the capacity of growth and increase with time, and so gradually spread, twined themselves together, and pushed their roots deeper and deeper into the soil; thus preparing the way for those profounder laws of the mind on which as we shall see in the sequel, the solution of the great problems of Life and Religion ultimately depend.

With this quiet and gradual evolution of my own thought, undisturbed by any intrusion into it from without, I was for the time-being content. I was in truth in a transition state between the breakdown of one system, Phrenology, which I had outgrown, and the uprise of another, Spencer's Philosophy of Evolution, which was just on the horizon; and in the lull and pause between them I had leisure to look round me and take stock of the deficiencies in my own intellectual outfit. The first thing that struck me as standing in need of repair, was a want in the power of expression. Of this I was first

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made aware in my conversations with my friend of the 'Boot-jack.' The ease and fluidity of his discourse, the copiousness, flexibility, and appropriateness of the language he used when compared with my own stinted and barren utterance, impressed me deeply, and I was anxious if possible to correct my own deficiency. And when I observed further the multitudes that flocked to hear the popular preachers and platform orators who occasionally visited the town, and the admiration with which their performances were regarded, I felt doubly determined that come what would, I must acquire this facility. For my deficiency, to put it definitely, was not so much in the power of translating thoughts and ideas into pictures, for this in a manner was natural to me; nor in the power of striking out images and likenesses, for in this exercise my mind was fairly fertile; but was simply a want of knowledge of words, of the names of things. This deficiency was due perhaps to my excessive devotion to sports and outdoor amusements during the whole period of my boyhood; to my entire want of interest in anything that had to do with business, or politics, or trade, and to the consequent absence of a large stock of words or phrases in ordinary use, taken from these pursuits; but more than all perhaps to my never having read any of the ordinary story books and tales of adventure, where shades of thought and feeling unknown in the talk of the playground, find abundant and accurate expression.

And yet I had been educated at one of the best schools of the time; at this school I had spent the greater part of four years in almost exclusive devotion to Classical studies, and at the end of that time had taken high honours in these subjects at the University Examination. The reader therefore may feel interested to know how it was that with such training I should have left the school, not only without any of those felicities of thought and expression for which the Classics are supposed to be so admirable an exercise, but without even an ordinary command of words, the greater number of which were

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derived from these very languages! The answer to this will not only throw light on the much-debated question as to the value of a classical education as a discipline of the mind, and as to the best mode of imparting it, but will in a measure serve also to explain the particular deficiency in myself which I am now considering. The fact was that during the three or four years of my attendance at school, we were given only such portions of Homer, Virgil, Horace, Livy, Cicero, Ovid, Sallust, and Lucian, as were set down in the University Curriculum; and when we had learned to translate them literally, to read and scan them without false quantity, to know all about iambics, choriambics, dactyls, spondees, and the cæsura; when we had learned the genealogy of the gods and demigods, the exploits of the heroes, the speeches they had delivered, or the battles they had lost or won, together with the mythological allusions that lay scattered everywhere up and down the page, our outfit was considered complete; and according to the extent and accuracy of this knowledge, did we take rank and position in the school. Into this mould we were all methodically pressed, any branching luxuriances or offshoots of thought being incontinently lopped off, as incongruous with the end in view. Indeed to have endeavoured to catch from some rising ground a glimpse of the beauteous fields of poesy that lay on either side of the dusty highway along which we were driven, and to which these pedantries were but the entrance and doorway; to have asked wherein the odes of Horace or speeches of Cicero were specially beautiful or great; or why this which was said or done was specially appropriate to the occasion, would have been resented by the Master as an impertinence. But of this indeed there was little danger, for as we staggered along under the heavy load of pedantry we had to bear, groping our way among the rocks and briars, from word to word and sentence to sentence as if for very life, we had neither the time, inclination, nor power to discern the poetic beauties of the landscape, to us

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invisible; and all oversight of the field as a whole, in which alone intelligent apprehension consists, was impossible. Of any such poetic or rhetorical graces or felicities we were neither expected nor required to know anything; nor did our teacher give us any the slightest indication that he himself either knew or cared. On the other hand, not to know the various labours of Hercules, the names and numbers of the Fates, the Furies, and the Winds, and the seven cities that contended for the honour of being the birthplace of Homer, that indeed was a fault on which he was inexorable! The consequence to us was, that the language of Homer in so far as it was a discipline or exercise of the taste and understanding, stood on precisely the same level as the language of the Maories or Hottentots, and a knowledge of his heroes as a knowledge of their chiefs.

It was the same with History. No attempt was anywhere made to winnow the record, to separate the chaffy and merely imposing parts from the significant and far-reaching; to exhibit the roots and stems of events in geographical situation and surroundings, or in economic or political necessity. Nothing of all this was vouchsafed us, but we were set instead to batten on a barren and wintry inventory of battles, dates, and kings, without intellectual connexion or cohesion, and as useless for real culture as an inventory of the old turnpikes and tavern-signs on a road long since closed, and on which the world was never again to travel. In a word, there was nothing human in his mode of teaching, nothing to show us that real identity in human nature which links those olden times to the familiar life of to-day; the consequence being that the o'er-freighted memory, worn out with the effort to retain this dead heap of facts, without continuous string of connection to thread them on, hastened, when the examination was past, to let them fall into oblivion. The truth was, the Head Master made no pretence of *teaching* in any genuine sense of that term, but only of *hearing* our lessons. He made no comments of his

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own as we went along; neither expatiating on, nor seeking to develop the immediate theme, nor in any way attempting to unite the particular verse, sentence, or chapter with what went before or after, so as to present a continuous chain of thought or sentiment along which the young mind groping its way to clearness, could creep from link to link. During all those years, indeed, I can recall but one solitary comment of his, which in any way helped to give resurrection and life to that antique world, or to rescue it from the ceremcnts of pedantry in which it lay entombed, uniting it for the moment with the present, the familiar, and the known; and the peculiar sensation it gave me, made an impression on me which remains to this day. I was reading Horace at the time, alone with the Master, preparatory to the University Examination, and when we came to the ode which tells how severe winter was melting away under the genial influence of spring, and I was groping my way through the first line or two, piecing the words together with as little sense of their beauty, or indeed of their meaning, as if I had been engaged in making out an acrostic, he suddenly stopped me, and moved apparently by some passing reminiscence, looked over his nose at me facetiously and said, paraphrasing the line, 'Gloomy Winter's noo awa'.' Surprised that the old Roman poet could have meant anything so simple, natural, and intelligible as this, I paused a moment looking up at him, when he asked me if I knew whose the line was, and on my answering at a venture 'Burns,' he said in his lofty way 'No, Tannahill,' and went on with the task as before. This was the first and last indication I ever had from him, that anything we heard or read within the walls of the school, could possibly have any analogy with, or bearing however remote on the world in which I lived and moved, or the thoughts and feelings with which I was familiar.

From all this it will be apparent to the reader that the deficiencies in my vocabulary due to the causes I have mentioned, were not likely to be repaired by the Classical

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training I had received—a training in which translation was confined entirely to the literal and dictionary meaning of the words, and in which a free rendering which might have strengthened one's choice of words, was forbidden. But how to set about repairing this deficiency? This was now the question with me.

I remembered having heard or read somewhere that Addison was the great master of pure and classic English, but on getting a copy of the *Spectator*, his many beauties and felicities of diction as well as his exquisite humour, diffused as a subtle essence over whole passages rather than concentrated in single sentences, were quite lost on me. The truth was I was not on the look-out for either fine humour or felicity of expression; what I really wanted was words, high-sounding, many-syllabled words, and the more of them the better! and I soon began to feel that I might have to plod through whole volumes of this simple diction, before I came on the style of phrase of which I was in search. I could do this sort of thing myself, I thought, and putting aside the volume, turned to the works of Washington Irving whom I had seen bracketed somewhere with Addison as a master of English Prose. But he too, like his great predecessor, although his thoughts were enveloped in a warmer, softer, and more sunny atmosphere, and were pervaded with a gentler and more pathetic melancholy, was too pure and simple in expression for my purposes, and had to be laid aside. And then I came casually across a copy of Burns' letters which pleased me better. Their stilted sentiments and high-flown expressions of compliment and adulation, like the stock models in the 'polite letter writer,' seemed to me very fine indeed; and I can remember copying out some of the more striking of them, as models for myself in letters of the same kind which I had in contemplation! But these too had the same fault as the essays of Addison; there were too few of the 'purple patches' in a given space; and I next betook me to the public library where years before I

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remembered having glanced into the works of Dickens. With him I was not disappointed, for besides his humour, I found in him a style of phrase and epithet which gave me much satisfaction. When, for example, he describes an old-clothes shop as "one of those convenient emporiums where gentlemen's new and second-hand clothes are provided, and the troublesome and inconvenient formality of measurement dispensed with," or in speaking of Zephyr in the debtor's prison remarks that "Mr. Pickwick struck the Zephyr so smart a blow on the chest as to deprive him of a considerable portion of the commodity which sometimes bears his name," or in depicting the dispute at Bob Sawyer's party says that "one individual expressed his decided unwillingness to accept any 'sauce' on gratuitous terms either from the irascible young gentleman with the scorbutic countenance or any other person who was ornamented with a head," I was charmed, and thought it wonderfully clever, and the power of language it exhibited quite unique! But passages so suitable to my purpose as these, occurred only at considerable intervals; and in my state of word-hunger by no means satisfied me. Full fruition, however, was not long in coming, for just about this time, one of the daily papers for the entertainment of its readers, took to dressing up the Police Reports in a style of mingled bombast and high-flown grandeur which was precisely to my mind, and in a form too, compact enough to satisfy my utmost demands for concentration. The newspaper was taken in at the Barber's Shop—the common rendezvous for gossip of all classes—and it was understood that the customer or lounger who should first secure the paper, should read the reports aloud to the rest of the company. The result was immediate and decisive; with one accord we all declared them to be productions of the rarest and purest genius! The style of these productions it is somewhat difficult to reproduce, but it was much after the manner of the passages I have just quoted from Dickens, but with still more exaggeration of

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epithet and phrase; and I cannot perhaps better illustrate it than by the Christy Minstrel version (which I have used in another place) of the old negro ballad of 'Old Uncle Ned,' where the lines 'He had no hair on the top of his head, just the place where the hair ought to grow' are rendered by 'He had no capillary substance on the summit of his pericranium, just in the position where the capillary substance ought to vegetate!' or by the high-sounding phraseology of the old Spelling-Bee exercise,—'It is amusing to conceive the harassing and unparalleled perplexity of a paralyzed pedlar gauging the symmetry of a pear peeled for a pony!' Now in all this the trick, for trick it was, consisted merely in the substituting of long, high-sounding words of Greek or Latin origin for their equivalents in plain Anglo-Saxon; and not in any addition to the many-sidedness, complexity, or luminousness of the images raised, in which indeed great power of expression, (as we shall see farther on when we come to the question of style) really consists. And yet I am bound to confess that in such trash as this, I fancied I saw more genius than in the works of the greatest masters of thought and expression. Nor was I alone in this, for I am convinced that had a vote been taken, the majority of the room would have shared my opinion. After a year or more, these reports having lost their freshness and flavour, or the writer of them having exhausted his invention, ceased altogether to appear, to my great regret; but in the meantime they had so whetted my appetite for words, that not getting enough of them in the ordinary way, I boldly threw away all pretence of reading either for the humour, the pathos, or the invention of the work in hand, caring for its words only, and did not rest satisfied until I had got hold of Crabbe's book of Synonyms and set to work on it as I would on a dictionary; beginning at the beginning and learning the words by heart straight through to the end! It had to come to this, and nothing less would satisfy me, and for six months or more I glutted and gorged myself on nouns and adjectives and synonyms,

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until I thought I had the command of a sufficient number for ordinary purposes of expression; after which I returned to my old studies which if not entirely neglected, had in the interval been pushed into the background of thought.

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CHAPTER XI.

MY UNCLE AGAIN.

IN this way I might have gone on speculating and dreaming and philosophizing for ever, mingling freely with the tide of human life on the side of its lighter amusements, its cricketing and dancing and love-making, without care for the morrow or its interests of business and money getting, had I not been shaken out of it and my life turned into a new channel by the arrival on the scene, of one who in my earlier years had given me that high regard for things of the mind which I still retained. This was my Uncle James the old bachelor, who after some years' absence had returned quite reformed and weaned from his old enemy, to live with us again for awhile. But unfortunately I had to confess to myself that robbed of the lustres which played about him when under the influence of drink, he no longer interested me as he had done before. He no longer lost himself in raptures over his high themes, flinging himself at them like some great geyser spouting against the sky; but like a bubbling cauldron now grown cold, contracted himself into a stiffish, pedantic reserve, holding his eye and tongue in readiness rather for a slip or a gibe, than for enthusiasms and admirations as of yore. He was no longer the great Trismegistus and Encyclopaedist of my earlier years; for with my own increase in knowledge, the vaunted learning which had so excited my awe and admiration now showed in its

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true proportions; the canopy which had seemed so vast and all-embracing, showing its rim and borders, and the web, its loose ends and inner linings; and he had to take his place among the rank and file of ordinary pedants. His knowledge of Mathematics which had loomed so large when he was in drink, he now modestly enough confessed to be bounded within the limits of Colenso's Algebra and the Geometry of Euclid! And although he had pushed his private excursions into the outlying fields of Trigonometry, it was only to take from thence a Pisgah view of those higher mathematics which he was not destined to enter. Of his favourite Astronomy he knew little beyond the ordinary text-books and Sir John Herschell's lectures,—a knowledge which consisted rather in the belief that eclipses could be predicted 'to the fraction of a minute' than in the power of so predicting them himself. His literature was confined to certain selected passages from Milton and Byron whom he admired for what he called their 'power of language,' giving me I remember as instance of the latter's poetry, his feat in Don Juan of making intellectual rhyme with 'hen-pecked-you-all!' In a word, he was a pedant not only in the narrower but in the wider sense of that term. With a certain simplicity of nature, and love for the vast and sublime, which with other endowments commensurate might have carried him far, he was deficient in intellect proper; and instead of expanding to the dimensions of Truth, and moving easily and lightly into the higher air of thought, he was hooked and impaled on the merest twigs and phrases, from which like a balloon grappled by some scrubby tree, he could not detach himself, but hung there enchanted from youth to age. An idolator of all that bore the name of 'intellectual,' like a gold-stick in waiting he was impressed rather with the trappings and pose, the casings and clothes in which thought was contained, than with the things themselves; and like a miser hugged these poor coins and counters as if they were the very bread of life. He was not open to new

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thought, or indeed to thought at all, but continued to fish in the old pools where he so long had puddled, thrashing the waters only to land such fish as had previously been put on his hook by hearsay and public opinion, and which he thought were his own. Encompassed thus in a galaxy of phrases like a religion, he lived in them as in an ideal world, doing reverence and worship to them daily, and finding their fragrance so sweet and satisfying as to enable him to dispense with all more intimate knowledge. It was the word 'vast' when applied to the Heavens, the word 'sublimity' applied to Astronomy, the word 'profound' applied to mathematics, which enchained and delighted his imagination, and not the things themselves. It was the epithet 'classical' which he had read or heard applied to Sir John Herschell's lectures, that called forth his enthusiasm, and not their particular contents; the 'oratory' of Dr. Chalmers, of which he often spoke as if it existed as a thing apart, and not what was specially said; and as for the way in which he rolled out the 'genius' of Newton, it was as if he conceived it to be a mighty reservoir of mystic unknown force, quite independent of the trains of thought which his special problems involved. Nevertheless the stimulus which these phrases had given me in my earlier days, long out-lived my disillusion in regard to himself, and in my rising ambitions played a most potent part for many years to come.

And now having returned to live with us, he was deeply mortified to learn that I had suddenly left the University some years before without having taken my degree. I had lost my chance of ever doing anything or becoming anything, he went on to say, and had thrown away the golden opportunity of being able to write the mystic letters B.A. after my name,—an honour in his opinion second to none. And when he had ascertained further that I had spent the intervening years dawdling about an engineer's office doing practically nothing, but busying myself with such fruitless speculations as the Problem of the World and the Human Mind—speculations

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these which were closed and sealed to him by orthodox Christian doctrine and which none might rashly venture to reopen—and worse than all when he learnt that for the greater part of the time I had been occupying myself with such cheap trash as Phrenology, he was enraged and disgusted beyond measure, and closing his lips with much emphasis declared that it was a disgrace to me and to all concerned in allowing it. So deeply disappointed was he with the course I had taken, that he could not let the matter drop, but kept returning to it again day after day. I was now twenty years of age he reminded me, and having lost my one great opportunity of a degree in Arts, there was nothing for it but that I should at once and without further loss of time, prepare for one of the 'learned professions' as he called them, closing his lips as he pronounced each word separately, and rolling the whole under his tongue with much gusto. Now I had already been thinking of some such course myself, but the delight I found in philosophizing and dreaming and amusing myself generally, had practically put my good intentions among the category of perpetual postponements. Besides, I felt no inward call to either of these professions; not to the Church, by reason of my disposition and opinions; not to Law, from an imaginative aversion to what I now recognize to be a most important and interesting study; not to Medicine, because of my pre-occupation with those other philosophical studies between which and medicine I did not then know that there was any connexion. It was to a great extent, therefore, a matter of indifference to me as to which of them I should enter, but pressed as I was by my uncle daily, I felt compelled at last to make a choice which in the end was determined by the merest chance. Happening one day to meet one of our local medical men in the street, he asked me what I was going to do, and on my answering that I did not know, he said 'Why not go in for medicine?' adding that if I liked I could read with him in his office preparatory to going up to the medical school in connexion with the

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University. Why not? I thought to myself, and languidly assented and before I had time to properly realize what I had done, he had written for a skeleton from which I was to study the bones (and which I scented with attar of roses I remember, to my sorrow!) and a list of the books I was to read. In this way I drifted into a profession without conscious forethought, and from the mere impossibility of choice among a number of indifferent opposites; and in the following Autumn, again attached myself to the Medical Department of the University which I had left so suddenly just four years before.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE UNIVERSITY.

THE Medical School in which I was now to pursue my studies, was a large stone building embosomed among the trees of the public park, and situated but a few hundred yards from the College to which it was affiliated. For a little while at first I felt somewhat strange and uncomfortable in my new surroundings. The figures of the students moving here and there solitary or in groups among the trees or athwart the lawns, on their way to and from the University lectures, and looking in their caps and gowns like beings of another order; the coldness, aloofness, and even contemptuousness, as I thought, with which we freshmen were regarded by the elder students; the old janitor himself who was coeval with the place, and who made a point of snubbing us mechanically and as a matter of form on our first entrance, so that we might afterwards know how to keep our places; even the very smell of the building itself through which the tainted atmosphere of the dissecting room at all times faintly diffused itself; all helped to affect me strangely and more or less unpleasantly. It was not long, however, before I felt myself quite at home in my new environment, mingling freely with the other boys and entering into all their sports and pranks with much ardour and enthusiasm. But in steady application to the work of the School I was sadly deficient, owing partly to the manner in

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which the subjects were taught there, but chiefly perhaps to that pre-occupation with literature and philosophy which I had brought with me from home.

The Professors as a body were of the ordinary type and were average specimens of their class. In private life and among their own friends they were men, I doubt not, of many and various accomplishments, but in their official capacity as lecturers, they turned like the moon but one face towards us, and once ensconced in their professorial chairs, rayed out from these high and sunless peaks mere cold and darkness, without enthusiasm, humour, or human geniality. Some of them were pompous and fussy, others deprecating and solicitous of our good opinion; some were shy, sensitive, and so easily offended that on the slightest noise or sign of inattention they would flush with indignation as if they had met with a personal affront; others were callous and indifferent, and coming in generally late, would mount the platform and unrolling their manuscript, gallop through its contents as through a catalogue, then rolling it up again would bow stiffly and hasten from the room; while others, again, were so nice, and overscrupulous that they would walk up to their desks as to an execution, their brows freighted and over-hung with the gravity of the message they had to deliver, and would proceed to dilate with so much scrupulosity and exactitude on the precise way in which we were to tie a string or support a back, that at the thought of ever being called upon to perform operations at once so delicate and momentous, we grew pale in our seats as we sat!

As to the *matter* of the lectures it was perhaps all that could be expected in the absence of cases and specimens on which to base a sure and firm opinion, and consisted for the most part, of the ordinary contents of the text books, interspersed here and there with extracts culled from a wider range of authorities, especially on points of dispute; the whole being flung at us pell-mell without word of guidance, and leaving us standing helpless, bewildered, and starved in the midst of what seemed a

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superabundance of wealth. No effort was made to correlate or co-ordinate the signs and symptoms of disease, to marshal them in the hierarchy of their importance, or to smelt out the variable and unessential elements from the cardinal and significant, but all alike were spread out before us as on an open stall from which we were to pick and choose as we pleased. Occasionally a question would arise which threatened to be interesting and illuminating, but it would speedily degenerate into a fruitless skirmish on the mere frontiers and outskirts of the subject, the battle being fought out and waxing hottest on the most poor and idle pedantries. The consequence was that we got no picture of the *ensemble* of disease, no image of the relations and connexions of symptoms and signs as they present themselves in reality, and I can truthfully say that it was not until I had been some years in practice for myself, that I had the slightest idea of what to look for, what questions to ask, or how to interpret the various signs and symptoms of the cases that came before me. One alone of all the professors made an effort by means of specimens and diagrams to put us in his place, as it were, at the bed-side of the patient, and to bring home to us the fruits of his own experience, but this method though fruitful, was so slow and fragmentary that at the end of the session more than half of his subject remained still unexplored.

It was the same with the teaching of Anatomy and Physiology. For although we had here the advantage of subjects and specimens, the demonstrations ended as they began in the analysis and dissection merely of the dead organs and tissues of the body down even to the minutest twig of artery and nerve, but with no attempt at their recomposition and synthesis as parts of an organic whole. There was no exhibition of the beauties and ingenuities of structure and mechanism that are everywhere present in the body—levers, pulleys, balances and the like,—or of those contrivances by which space is economized and the greatest strength given at the least expense of bulk; no explanation of the way in which the various structures are

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related to one another and to the great environment of the world in which they have to work; and more than all, no comparison of the various structures and organs with their analogues in the lower animals, with the view of exhibiting the way in which differences of function or environment have necessitated the differences of structure observed;—nothing of all this, without which, indeed, intelligent understanding of the body of man is impossible. In truth, so far as I can remember no hint was ever given us that man had such a thing as an environment at all, or if he had, that it had anything whatever to do with the teaching of anatomy or physiology; and had it not been for the visible presence before us on the dissecting table of the human body itself, it might (for anything distinctive that was taught us) have been the body of a fish, a reptile, or a monkey. On the other hand each little detail of structure or composition, as for example the number of little holes in the bones for the passage of blood-vessels, or of the bosses and ridges on their surface to which muscles were attached, was dwelt on at length and with much satisfaction, even enthusiasm. The consequence was that the students who were going up for honours or scholarships, feeling that they only got from the lectures what they could read up as well at home and with much less trouble, came in late and hurried away again as soon as possible; and after putting in the regulation number of compulsory lectures, ceased to attend altogether As for the rest of us who took matters more leisurely and easily, we yawned away the time lying listlessly about the seats, and paying little attention to what was said (except perhaps where the lecturers were also examiners and then we took copious notes!); and particularly during the evening lectures we might be seen dozing and snoring on the floor of the open plateau above the level of the amphitheatre, so that a stranger entering by the upper door in the shaded light, might have stumbled over body after body of us as we lay strewn about like corpses on a battlefield!

As to the students themselves, although of every variety of

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type individually, they might all in so far as I was affected by them, be reduced under two or three categories. There were first the readers who were going up for scholarships, and who to avoid the loss of time incident on attendance at the lectures, rarely, as I have said, put in an appearance at the School. As a body they were steady and hard-working, but with no aims beyond the scholarships which lay immediately ahead of them, and to which, indeed, they were ready for the moment to sacrifice even their real professional interests, shirking the practical work at the Hospital no less than the lectures at the School. Personally they were uninteresting men for the most part, and had as a rule no gifts beyond tenacious memories and steady powers of application. Having little in common with them therefore, either in tastes or in aims, I naturally saw little of them and was more attracted by the second set, namely the great mass of ordinary students. These were mostly what one may call good fellows, men who had sufficient range and variety of human interests to resist being altogether absorbed in the cramming necessary to pass the honours examinations. They were not so steady as the readers, it is true, nor so ascetic as some of my philosophic friends, but they had a rough geniality, a fondness for games and pranks and enjoyment generally, which united easily with the life I had left behind me at home. Always ready to take a night out at the theatre or opera, or even at the minstrels or variety entertainments that were going on, their genial optimism and joyous mingling with the actual currents of the world, delighted me, and when at the close of the session the school went down town in a body for a night's revels—escapades, rather, which generally brought us into conflict with the police before the night was over!—I was usually to be found in the crowd among them. But as a rule they had no aims or interests higher than that of making money by their profession; and although, therefore, on the most friendly terms with them as a body, I formed with a few exceptions, no intimate friendships

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with them personally. These I reserved for the little circle that constituted what I may call the Literary Set. There were only four of us, all told, and in spite of wide differences in temperament and disposition we were all united in one common devotion to Literature and Philosophy as the goal of culture; and in repudiating money-getting as the supreme object in life, regarding it rather as a hateful expedient, a disagreeable necessity. We had early found one another out, as by a kind of instinct, after the opening of the session; and our friendship and intercourse once begun, continued unbroken throughout the whole of our college course. And although since then, all-divorcing Time has flung us far and wide athwart the world, their figures as they rise before me in those far off years still haunt my memory with a delicious sweetness. Little, indeed, did we dream in those joyous happy days, as we walked about encompassed with stars and with the very sky above us flecked with golden dreams, little did we think of the Future, and of the varying fortunes that lay hid in it, or of the distant isles on which it would enwaft us. There was A—, the apostle of temperance in the set, huge in bulk and good-nature, and of great volubility, loving the theatre, the poems of Byron, the opera, and wrapped up in literary, theological, and philosophical controversy, but who after a short period of practice in the country succumbed to temptation, and died ultimately of the vice which he had so long and so eloquently denounced. Then there was the buoyant, the ever-genial, ever-hopeful C—, flaccid of purse but careless of the morrow and easy-going to a fault, yet with a high honour and sensitive pride that resented a rudeness as a stain, and to whom poetry, literature, and philosophy were as his daily bread. Cheerful and light-hearted as the morning in the society of his friends, he had when alone a deep vein of pathetic melancholy which led him to ask in imagination of everyone he passed in the street, 'I wonder are you happy?' and if he decided not, to picture to himself their condition, and rehearse in imagination the circumstances

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of their lives with a real and unfeigned sympathy. But for him a happier destiny was reserved, for he is now the kind father, the genial host, the prosperous physician; still retaining undimmed through the lapse of years all his old love for the things of the spirit.

The last of our set and the one with whom as a fellow boarder I was thrown most intimately into contact was M—, now a Professor himself and well known in the world of Science, between whom and myself in spite of an aboriginal difference in mental constitution almost polar in its antagonism, there existed the strongest points of affinity; so that while we were for ever being repelled by the differences in our sympathies, we were ever united again by our community of ideals and aims. He was a long, gaunt, and hollow figure, with pale emaciated face, but with an expression in his smile and in the soft tones of his voice, in which you read at once all the modesty, truthfulness. and childlike simplicity of his nature. But deep down in the core of his being was an ascetic, puritanic strain, a tendency when judging not only of men and things but of himself, to dig down below the conventional code of morality which the ordinary worldling finds it sufficient to follow and observe, to a deeper stratum; and to apply to them a more delicate and sensitive reagent—a reagent which should search the very soul itself to find its hidden spots and drag them forth. With me, on the other hand, it was quite different. I had never had the slightest tendency to this kind of moral introspection, this searching of the heart as if it were some old trunk, with the object of turning out any questionable motives that might be suspected there, but borne along on the tide of life, lived in the passing hour without memory or remorse, and with no higher code of morality than was common among the average young men of the time. The consequence was that while I could mingle with the easy-going, pleasure-loving, theatre-haunting, wine-bibbing throng of good fellows, entering into their revels and loving imaginatively to realize in

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myself their spirit, aims, and point of view; and while in this companionship, too, I could find food for my own thoughts and ideals, extracting from it those laws of the mind of which I was always in search, and gathering from it wisdom and experience with which to compose my picture of the world, my friend in spite of his openness of mind and his real desire to unite himself morally and sympathetically with his fellows (he often used to say he envied me the ease with which I mingled with the average sensuous man), was repelled by some inner barrier not to be transgressed, and would have felt, with his more sensitive conscience, any more intimate contact as a stain. In spite, however, of these differences in feeling and sympathy, we were united by a bond equally strong in our common indifference to the worldly ambitions of money, of social, and even of professional success; and in our living in an ideal world of high aims, where Truth for its own sake was our only object, in the pursuit and discovery of which, all our merely personal ambitions, and they were strong enough too, were to find their home and aréna. And yet no sooner did we come to the question of what the truth was in any particular instance, than the deep cleavage in our sympathies and moral estimates at once began to make itself felt. Especially was this the case in all questions of human life as distinct from abstract speculations merely;—those concrete questions in which the good and evil that pertain to all mortal things are so subtly and inextricably blended. Questions like these, in our little circle, were constantly arising out of the fixed ideas or personal predilections of one or another of us,—such questions, for example, as Teetotalism, the poetry of Byron, the influence of the Theatre, the relations of the Sexes, and the great question of Human Liberty. On all these the views of my friend and myself were more or less at variance, but especially was this the case on the last, as lying at the base of all the rest. The whole emphasis of my mind and the set of all its currents—its aspirations, its pride,

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its sensitiveness, its hatred of control,—ran in the direction of making the expansion and elevation of the individual mind the end and aim of human life. Liberty, therefore, in its widest sense was my ideal, and although I had as yet thought little, or indeed not at all, on forms of government or politics, I naturally gave my full sympathy to such institutions and arrangements of society as favoured this end, ignoring or making but little of the tendency which an uncontrolled liberty has, to pass in individual instances into license or immorality. My friend, on the contrary, making a high personal morality his aim and ideal, and moral order rather than individual expansion the supreme end of society; and observing moreover, how the rowdyism of the world increases as you descend to its lower strata; had naturally more sympathy with those milder despotisms which would if possible compel men to be good and respectable, than with that democratic spirit which in permitting them to expand, at the same time opened the door to personal immorality and grossness. The consequence was that each taking quite unconsciously the premises of his argument from his own special sympathies, affinities, repulsions, and moral ideals (to which, indeed, he gave an inordinate degree of importance) could not understand how it was that on applying them to the question in hand with a logic that seemed so irrefragable, the other should fail to be convinced; and in the rising heat of discussion would at last begin to suspect and even to hint that he was being unfairly dealt with, I accusing my friend, I remember, of shuffling, he, me of sophistry, until the altercation rising higher and higher we were only kept from a downright rupture by our companion throwing oil on the troubled waters; after which all would go on again as before. It was a pretty comedy or even puppet show all this, with Fate pulling smilingly at the wires, and yet when I think of how deadly in earnest we both were in our opinions, it was not without a pathetic significance as an emblem of human life. Like a skilful hypnotist, Fate overlooking the

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whole field of life with her controlling eye, takes this natural illusion of ours by which we turn our own special sympathies and moral predilections into criteria of eternal truth; and playing on it, uses it as the means to work out her own great ends. There is perhaps no deeper secret of the world than this whereby mortal natures like coral-builders are made the instruments of working out designs more deep and complex than those they know, and more spacious than can be grasped within the contracted compass of their souls; and by which to keep us to our work, we are armed with these partialities of antagonism or of sympathy which although deciduous as the forest leaves, and fugitive as the generations of mortal life, we, poor creatures of the hour, identify with the Ideal and Eternally True. I was not as old then as I am now, and did not then see what, indeed, the succeeding years have taught me in all its fullness, namely, that in all things human as distinct from things mathematical or abstract, not only the cut and colour of our opinions but even their very skeleton and framework, in their most general configuration and aspect, are moulded, fashioned, and determined by our moral sympathies, and by the desires and affections of the heart. And although neither I nor another shall in our thinking succeed in altogether jumping this necessity imposed on us by what is called our 'personal equation,' I trust if not proof against it, at least never again to be unmindful of it, and while marking its influence on the various Thinkers and Philosophers whom I am about to pass in review, am well aware that the reader will have ample opportunity of discounting its influence in reference to myself.

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CHAPTER XIII.

PROFESSORS.

WHILE these discussions were going on so merrily in our little literary *coterie*, and our minds were so full of poetry, the theatre, Byron, and literary and philosophical questions generally, it was suggested by one of our number that as we had some spare time on our hands, we should take the fourth year courses in English Literature and Metaphysics which were being delivered in the Arts department of the College, only a few hundred yards from the Medical School. Now having been but recently so deeply concerned in repairing the deficiencies in my vocabulary and in my command of language generally, I readily assented to this, but remembering the barrenness of the old academic teaching at the Grammar School, it was not, I confess, without some misgiving as to the result. The subject of the particular lectures on English Literature which we were most anxious to hear was the second part of Shakspeare's play of Henry the Fourth, and it so chanced that we made our entrance into the class-room when the lecturer had reached that part of the play where the rebels are debating among themselves as to whether they are strong enough to meet the forces of the king, and at the point where Lord Bardolph in a long speech compares the folly of their going to war before they had accurately ascertained the amount of assistance they were to receive from Northumberland, to the

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folly of the man who should begin to build a house before he had first ascertained its cost, and who, in consequence, might be compelled to stop the work for want of means to carry it on; and so leave, as he says, 'his part-created cost a naked subject to the weeping clouds, and waste for churlish winter's tyranny.' This looked promising enough, and although with no definite idea as to what I was to expect from these lectures, I still entertained the hope that the great superiority of Shakspeare over all other writers, of which I had read and heard so much, should now be demonstrated and made clear to me, either in his knowledge of the human mind, as exemplified in the sequence and connexion of thought and feeling in his dialogues, or in his power of expression and command over the keys of language; instances of either of which superiorities were to be found on almost every page. But instead of this, the Professor, who has always remained with me as perhaps the most perfect type of the academic book-worm whom I remember to have seen,—a tall, crane-necked, skin-dried figure in spectacles, with small, wizened face, and nose with which he sniffed the air as he moved through the Park on his way to and from the College, his hair streaming behind him like a comet,—instead of picking out phrases and sentences with the view of exhibiting their special beauty or appropriateness, broke them up into particles and fragments like a grammarian, to show us the parts of speech they were made up of! 'What figure of speech, Mr. Brown,' he would say, addressing one of the students, 'does Shakspeare use in this line?' 'A metaphor, Sir!' 'Quite right. And you, Mr. Smith, what in the next line?' 'A simile.' 'Very good,' and so on throughout the whole lecture. And this sort of thing, which might have been in place in the higher standards of a Board School, was what in the University *conspectus* of the lectures was called 'an analysis of the play!' We were all grievously disappointed, but thinking perhaps that this exquisite trifling might have been only an accidental or subsidiary part of the scheme, we resolved to persevere for a

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while longer, only to find, however, that the same thing was repeated from day to day until we could stand it no longer, and ceased altogether to attend.

Disappointed and even disgusted with these lectures on English Literature, one or two of us resolved to try the course on Metaphysics to see if it would yield us anything more fruitful and satisfactory; and took our seats accordingly among the fourth year students who were preparing to take their degree. The professor, in this case a simple, open-minded man of much metaphysical subtlety and acuteness, and whom I greatly esteemed for the modesty and gentleness of his demeanour, was at the time of our entrance, lecturing on the Philosophy of Sir William Hamilton. He had got to that part of the discourse where Hamilton is explaining the difference between a perception and a sensation, and in labouring to make this distinction clear to us, nearly the whole time of the lecture was taken up. We are going to be fed on the husks again, I thought to myself, remembering our professor of Literature and his anxiety that we should understand the precise difference between a metaphor and a simile; and as I reflected that this analysis and distinction between a sensation, a perception, and the like, was merely a part of the grammar of thought, I felt that it could have no more influence on the production of thought, in which alone I was interested, than the mere grammar of sentences has on the formation of style. In a word, it was purely negative, pedantic, and barren, and long before the lecture was over I had ceased to take the slightest interest in it. In the next and succeeding lectures, however, the subject was changed, and the Professor was endeavouring to explain to us the 'Critique of Pure Reason' of Emanuel Kant, which soon interested me like a puzzle by the difficulties of its phraseology, difficulties which had already brought the most advanced students to a stand-still. The problem of the 'Critique' was to explain how our minds which are contained within the circle of their own sensations, as it were, can by any possibility get out of themselves so as to get

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a knowledge of things which lie quite outside of them; or in other words, how our minds which are conscious only of a series of sensations passing across them like scenes in a panorama, each one swallowing and being swallowed up in turn, can ever arrive at such a continuous, definite, and abiding impression as is involved in the idea of an external object; and in listening to the patient attempts of the lecturer to make the process clear to us, I was as much at sea, I confess, as the rest of the students. And there, indeed, I should have remained, had I not taken to piecing the parts together for myself, and at last managed to picture the whole process under the figure of one of those carding machines in a woollen factory, where the separate scraps of wool which are put in at one end, come out a definite and continuous thread of yarn at the other! The raw wool corresponded to the raw material of sensation received by our various senses of sight, touch, hearing, and the like; this was then passed through a couple of grooves or rollers,—Time and Space,—belonging to the mind and called 'the forms of sense,' which impressed their shape on the raw material much in the same way as a sausage machine does on the meat that passes through it; this done, the larger cords and strands thus produced were next passed up through another but finer series of grooves and rollers, also belonging to the mind, called the 'categories,' by which another set of attributes, such as 'causation,' 'reciprocity,' 'modality,' and the like were added, until at last all these various unlike strands were brought into one by being passed through what was called the 'unity of self-consciousness;' and so at last issued in that definite judgment or piece of knowledge, continuous amid the fleeting sensations, which corresponded in the carding-machine to the definite thread of yarn! This was but a superficial view of the 'Critique' as a whole, I am aware, but by enabling me to translate the several parts of the picture back into the corresponding phraseology of Kant, it was of great service to me in those class examinations at the end of

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the week, in which the teaching of the previous days was summed up and recapitulated. But with it all, I felt still what I had felt years before when reading John Stuart Mill, that if this were Metaphysics, it was only, after all, an attempt more or less successful to define what a sensation was, a perception was, a judgment was, a cause was, and the like, or in other words to tell us in what the act of knowing consisted, when my mind was hungering and thirsting for the knowledge itself of what specially I was to feel, what to judge, what to believe of this great and various world around me. I soon began to think it all a bore and sheer waste of time, in a world where there was so much that it concerned one to know, and so short a span of life to know it in; and in no long time ceased altogether to attend these metaphysical classes as I had previously done the literary ones. With these specimens of College teaching, and with the added conviction of how little I had really lost in not going on with the Arts course on which I had entered some time before, I returned to my old studies, uninfluenced in any way in the evolution of my thought by the experiences through which I had passed.

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CHAPTER XIV.

A NEW HORIZON.

AT the outset of these early speculations I was engaged it may be remembered in the attempt to get at a knowledge of the mind from the *outside*, as it were, by the phrenological method of taking measurement and survey of the bumps and organs on the cranium, and this plan proving barren and unavailing I then tried the opposite one of getting at it from the *inside*, that is to say by observing the connexion and relationship of thoughts and feelings within myself; working in this way gradually from the most simple and superficial platitudes of thought, through such successive strata as were reflected in lectures, sermons, and other the like dissertations on human life, and so on down to the deeper and more recondite laws; with the feeling, implicit rather than definitively formulated, that if I could but sound the laws of the mind to the bottom, in so doing I should in some way or other, I knew not precisely how, come to understand also that World of Nature in which as yet I had taken but little interest, as well as solve the perplexing problem of Religion which from want of fresh material had lain in abeyance from the time when the failure of Butler's Analogy to give me satisfaction, had banished the subject from my mind. Time meanwhile had been softly passing on, and new thoughts and ideas outside the range of merely human life, were beginning to awaken in me and to

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demand satisfaction for themselves; and I had not been long at the University, before stimulated by the new life about me and by the discussions in our little literary *coterie*, the great problems of life and of human destiny, of the whence, why, and whither, of mortal things, arose in me and took possession of me with all their force. But this new environment which in connexion with my growing years had awakened and quickened in me these new problems, had so far done little or nothing towards solving them. The greater experience of men which I had got from the more intimate knowledge of the characters and modes of life of so many students, had served only to widen my knowledge of the laws of the Mind, but not of the laws of Nature or of the World, and therefore threw no new light on the problem of Human Destiny; and the discussions in our literary set although awakening and stimulating, had added nothing of sufficient weight or originality to modify either my opinions, my method, or my point of view. And as this plan of mine of attacking the Problem of the World from *within*, that is to say from a widening knowledge of the laws of the human mind, had so far thrown no light on the new problems that were agitating me, and seemed in my impatience to be very slow in its operation, I was just in that state of mind in which, like a chemical solution, I was ready to crystallize around the first great *external* principle or generalization (the law of evolution or what not), which while doing no violence to these laws of the mind I had so long been gathering (and which had a scientific validity in themselves independent of any or all theories of the World), would give satisfaction to this newly awakened passion for light on the great problems of Religion, of Nature, and of Human Destiny.

I had but recently come across a little anonymous work—'The Vestiges of Creation'—which had deeply interested me by the boldness with which it attempted to show that the great variety and diversity of animal and vegetable life on the

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globe, had arisen by a process of natural evolution, the lowest forms having themselves sprung from the inorganic world under favouring conditions of the environment. Now having for a long time doubted the truth of the doctrine of 'special creations' as revealed in Genesis, I was quite prepared to accept some such theory as this; but owing to the crudeness with which it was worked out in detail, beyond a vague idea of evolution in general, I got little from it of permanent value; and the book itself as a whole had little influence on the course of my speculations.

I next came across Darwin's great work on the 'Origin of Species,' and can still remember how impressed I was with the evidences it furnished of the à priori *possibility* of Evolution, drawn from the great organic changes that can be wrought in the various breeds of dogs and pigeons, by the simple process of artificial selection; as well as of the *truth* of Evolution by the fact of the existence in certain animals of aborted or rudimentary organs,—teeth, tails, and the like,—organs which could serve no useful function in the existing species, and are explicable only on the hypothesis that they have been derived from ancestors in whom they existed in full and normal development. But as the 'Vestiges of Creation' had already prepared me to accept the general doctrine of Evolution, and as I was not specially qualified to judge of the value of much of the scientific evidence adduced by Darwin in its support, I was not so deeply impressed with the discovery of the great principles of 'Natural Selection' and the 'Survival of the Fittest' as the Scientific World in general had been; and can remember feeling vaguely that although both 'Natural Selection' and the 'Survival of the Fittest' were doubtless factors of great and even cardinal importance, there was something more in this steady ascent of the world upwards to a greater fullness, harmony, and perfection of life, unbaulked as it had all along been either by Time or accident, than could be fully accounted for by this mere wind-swept winnowing of things by a blind, undiscriminating, unregarding Fate.

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Following close on the 'Origin of Species' came Huxley's 'Lay Sermons and Addresses,' then recently published, which not only added greatly to my knowledge of the special subjects passed under review, and deepened my belief in the general doctrine of Evolution by the fresh evidences of its truth which they furnished, but delighted me also by the boldness and vigour of their attacks on the old theological strongholds of superstition, and by the support which they gave to my old belief in the intimate and even exact correspondence of all mental manifestations whatever, with physical conditions of the brain and nervous system. But what charmed me still more in these discourses was the clearness, trenchancy, and brilliance of their style, and I can still remember the admiring delight with which I regarded the following sentence in one of the addresses, summing up as it did in the smallest compass all the trenchancy, picturesqueness, and anti-theological animus of the author's manner;—'Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science like the strangled snakes around that of Hercules'—a sentence which fixed itself in my memory for many a day, and to which as a model of expression I kept reverting with admiring despair.

It was not, however, until I returned home for the vacation, that I came across the book which by putting this theory of Evolution once for all on a deep philosophic basis, filled up the gaps in my theory of the World, revolutionized my method of thought, and for a time solved for me the great problems of Life, of Nature, and of Human Destiny. This was Herbert Spencer's 'First Principles,' the first volume of his great system of Evolutionary Philosophy, a book that fell on the orderly line of my mental evolution like a shell, blasting and wrecking it, and which even when it ultimately failed to satisfy me, yet left me with a foundation so solid for the superstructure of Idealism which I was afterwards to erect upon it, that it has remained unshaken to this day. For here, on a mind blank as a sheet of white paper, as it were, and with no

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antecedent theories to be wiped away, was sketched as at a single sitting in all its complexity, and with but a minimum of trouble, too, on my part, a complete picture of the Universe; of the Stars, of the Solar System, of Nature, of the formation of the Earth and the changes it had undergone, its oceans and rivers, its mountains and valleys, its rocks and soils, its plants and animals in all their variety from the lowest up to man himself, the races of men, and the structure of the societies they have built for themselves; and all following the same order and course of development, all alike both in their *ensemble* and in their parts passing like an egg from the simple to the complex, from the incoherent to the coherent, from the indefinite to the definite. And not only this, but better still, the reason why everything passed through this particular order and course of development and not another, was clearly set forth; and it was demonstrated that the whole process was but the mathematical and physical corollary of a simple universal fact,—a fact taken for granted as an axiom in all argument, all reasoning, all proof—the fact namely that the Universe is made up of a *fixed* quantity of force existing under the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion, or if you will, of a *fixed* quantity of Matter. And just as the water in some great but strictly limited reservoir far up on the mountains, when the flood-gates are opened moves downwards towards the sea, rolling and tumbling and bubbling and hissing, until when it reaches the plain it spreads itself softly outwards on all sides, breaking on its outmost rim and confines into the most varied and beautiful scintillations of fringe and foam, and yet at each stage in its journey the whole mass remains in quantity the same as that which first burst from its mountain home; so when Creation opens and the forces imprisoned in the homogeneous cloud-wrapt Matter of the World are left free to play, the whole gathers itself together and rolls and concentrates itself into great balls and systems and suns, roaring and howling through the vacant depths of Time until on this its

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outmost wave we see it softly pulsating and breaking into all the beautiful promiscuity of land and sea; of rock and crystal, of flower and animal and tree; but all the while and through all its changes the original store of energy and power remaining in quantity the same. And furthermore according to Spencer it was precisely because the quantity of Force was fixed, and existed in these antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion, that the ball was first set a rolling and afterwards continued in its evolution, until at last it broke into this vast miscellany and diversity of forces, these shining individual existences; all alike passing by a mathematical and physical necessity from the simple to the complex, from the incoherent to the coherent, from the indefinite to the definite. Or to put the essence of the theory in another way:—Given a fixed quantity of Force existing in the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion, or what he calls the 'Persistence of Force,' you could predict beforehand that the mass would and must by a mere mechanical and physical necessity evolve into just such a Universe, just such a Solar System, just such a world of Nature and Life, just such types and variety of tree and animal and flower as those we know; and had one an intellect capacious as a god's to grasp the entire movement in all its complexity, not a hair on a nettle, or vein on a leaf but could have been anticipated and foreseen. It was a magnificent generalization, carefully wrought out in all its parts; and in its contemplation I was lost in wonder and admiration. For some time I had been anxious for light on the great Universe of planets and stars, and here it was; for some theory of the world more credible and assured than the six days Creation of Genesis, some theory of the origin and significance of the great variety of animal life about me, a theory which if not solving, must by the analogies it would afford, largely influence one's view of the great problem of human destiny; and here it was. I was delighted, and whirled away for the time by the splendour of these great generalizations of the World and Nature, entirely lost my own

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centre of gravity and lived in a kind of delicious intellectual dream.

Now had the book done nothing more than this for me, it would merely have filled up the gaps in my knowledge of the world of outward Nature, and at most have given but greater scientific precision or a deeper philosophical basis to views which I had already received from the 'Vestiges of Creation' and the 'Origin of Species.' But it did more. It reconciled for the first time (by over-arching the breach between them, and showing that at bottom they both rested on the same basis, namely, the Persistence of Force), Religion and Science, which I had always felt instinctively to be antagonistic both in their methods and their aims; in this way furnishing me with a solution of that great problem of Religion which for want of material had lain so long in abeyance. It was this part of the book that interested me more than any other. The whole demonstration, which we shall see in its proper place farther on, was so clear, so connected, so logical, that I was forced to yield my assent; and as my anxiety on the subject of Religion was rather that of one who wishes for something that will harmonize his views of the world with the high ideals and aspirations of the heart, than of one who is looking out for some object of devotion or worship, I was for the time being satisfied. It was not until about a year after, when I came to the 'Principles of Psychology,' that I began to feel how hollow was this pretended reconciliation of Religion and Science, how materialistic was its method in spite of all protestations to the contrary, and how surely the theory when stripped of its disguises, instead of harmonizing with the high ideals of the heart, cut sheer into their very core. But of all this, and the mental misery it entailed on me for the next few years; of my efforts, for a long time unavailing, to put my finger on the secret fallacy which I felt to be lurking somewhere in these calm, closely-reasoned and unimpassioned pages; of my finding it at last and the release it gave to my

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imprisoned spirit; of all this we shall see more anon. Meanwhile it is sufficient here to say that a new horizon had been opened up before me; an entirely new system of thought had been flung into the midst of my speculations, the first effect of which was to wean me entirely from my old concentration on the individual mind, on physiognomy, on human nature, on the diagnosis of individual character, and the like, and to centre my intellectual interest for years to come on the great problem of Life and the World. Its second effect was to change my subjective method for an objective one, that is to say instead of trying to get at the Problem of the World from within, by a study of the laws of the human mind and the nature of the soul, I was made to look without, to some external physical principle such as the fixed quantity of Force in antagonistic forms, or in other words the 'Persistence of Force,' for my solution of the enigmas of life.

Accordingly, when the session opened, I hastened to pour into the ear of the friend and fellow-student with whom I had already had so many discussions, the principles of the new Philosophy which had so enthralled me; dilating on them, pointing out their range and depth and scope, and dwelling especially on the splendid demonstration by which at last Religion and Science had been reconciled. But to my annoyance and surprise he turned a deaf ear to my new found theory as if he scented some taint of materialism about it, talked vaguely of having found something more real and soul-satisfying in Carlyle, but admitted at the same time that he was not precisely prepared to put his finger on what was wrong, although feeling that it did not fill up the necessities of his heart. He was right, as we shall see anon; but meantime in spite of his protests my belief in the system was entire and unshaken, and I went about among the members of our little philosophical party as an undisguised propagandist. I introduced the book to the notice of the fourth year metaphysical students at the College, to whom it was up to

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that time unknown; and instead of attending as I should have done to my medical studies, spent most of my time in conversations and discussions on the new Philosophy.

Meanwhile time was moving on, and the final examination for my medical degree was already in sight. Although my mind during the whole period of my college course had been more immersed in Literature and Philosophy than in Medicine, I had nevertheless been fairly regular in my attendance at lectures, and had managed in one way or another to pick up without much reading, sufficient knowledge to justify me in going up for my degree. But as the days of examination drew nearer, my thoughts turned more and more to the future. Was I to settle down to the humdrum life of a country doctor, or should I remain in the city where I could combine the pursuits of Literature with the practice of medicine? I could not decide, and at bottom liked neither alternative. I was determined if possible not to take a country practice, and on the other hand I could not very well see how my literary designs were to be furthered by remaining in the city. For in our literary set, we had noticed and often remarked that nearly all our text-books, as well as books on Literature and Philosophy, were of foreign importation, American or English; and that such of our Canadian aspirants as had ventured on publication were not likely, from the tone in which they were spoken of by the students, to be accorded much honour in their own country. It was this, perhaps, more than anything else that finally determined me to come to London, where after taking my diploma I could start practice, and at the same time have the advantage of the great public libraries in which to pursue my favourite studies in the intervals of work—studies, which if they ever saw the light, would start with no disadvantage either from their place of publication, or from the country of my birth. The more I thought of this course the more determined I was to carry it through; and accordingly after passing my examination and getting my degree, I bade

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farewell to my old friends, and in the following week embarked for England; resolved in my youthful dreams to conquer, if application and study could do it, the great world of Literature and Philosophy!

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PART II.

ENGLAND.

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MY INNER LIFE,

BEING A CHAPTER IN

PERSONAL EVOLUTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

PART II.—ENGLAND.

BOOK I.—THE LOST IDEAL.

HERBERT SPENCER.

ARISTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY.

MEDICINE.

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CHAPTER I.

HERBERT SPENCER.

ACCORDINGLY one sunny afternoon in May, light of heart and nothing doubting, I embarked on unknown waters for an unknown shore, with such poor equipment and outfit of accomplishments for my enterprise as the reader may imagine, and with no other possessions but those of youth and hope; and for quest, not gold nor any merely material or sensuous prosperity, but the Ideal itself, which burnt within me with an intense and steady glow, and which as I lay idly dreaming on the deck, seemed to ride before me in the sky blazoned above the masts high over the wind and sea. This ideal it was that in years gone by had weaned me from the games and sports of my boyhood and kindled in me the desire for mathematical distinction; which had superseded this in time by the longing for a broader and more genial range of thought and culture; and which now in opening up before me still wider intellectual problems, and stimulating me to still higher ambitions, was impelling me over the seas to a land where better opportunities, as I thought, existed for their solution and realization. The special problem in which I was now immersed and the one into which all particular rills of thought, begin where I would, eventually flowed, was the problem of problems, the great Problem of the World and of Human Existence, of the end and aim, the meaning and destiny

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of mortal things; and to find some solution of it that while meeting all the demands and tests of truth should at the same time satisfy the high ideals of the heart, was now the increasing object of my thoughts. For in spite of the load of smaller scepticisms as to revelation, inspiration, miracles, and the like, that I carried about with me, my belief in the dignity of the human mind and the high destiny of the world and the human soul was still unclouded. Not indeed that I was in search of any supernatural object in which to find satisfaction for the ordinary religious feelings of awe, and worship, and prayer; for the figures of the old kirk elders of my boyhood as they rose before me lifting their harsh and untuned voices in supplication to a Jehovah harsh and inexorable as themselves, would have effectually poisoned these springs of emotion if indeed they had ever existed in me; rather the object of my search was some Spirit or Soul of Truth and Beauty in Things, which should give support and guarantee to the Ideal which I felt working within myself, and which I instinctively felt must somewhere in the wide world have its home; a Spirit or Soul in the discovery and exhibition of which my purely personal and selfish ambitions, far from being extinguished, should find their field of exercise, their object and their goal.

But I had not been many days at sea, before a cloud scarcely larger than a man's hand appeared on the horizon of my dreams, and gradually overspreading the sky, deepened and darkened until it settled at last into absolute night; and behind it for a time all the ideals in which I lived, all the aims and ambitions which I held most dear, wasted as in disastrous eclipse. This strange and to me most unexpected result arose on the perusal of Spencer's 'Principles of Psychology'—the fourth volume in his System of Philosophy—which I had begun before leaving home and had now just finished, especially of those portions where he explains the precise relation he conceives to exist between Mind and Brain, and between both and the great general laws of Matter, Motion, and Force. A rough outline of

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his doctrine on these important questions, was indeed contained in the volume on 'First Principles' over which I had grown so enthusiastic at College, but embedded as it was amid so many new and startling generalizations of other orders, it had for the time being quite escaped my notice, the more so indeed as in general outline it was practically identical with a doctrine I had myself long held, namely, of the intimate dependence of the mind on the molecular activity of the brain and nervous system. But the chief reason perhaps, why the outline of Spencer's doctrine in 'First Principles' made so little impression on me, was that in that work he had by a subtle but contradictory and shifting use of the term 'Persistence of Force,' managed to underprop all the phenomena of the world both mental and physical with what he called an Unknown Power—a kind of background of Being which was to be the object of Religion, and in a way to take the place of our ordinary conception of God, and which therefore instead of destroying the high ideals of the mind, would give them rather, I imagined a certain basis and support. But when I arrived at the volume in the 'Principles of Psychology' where the whole subject of the origin, genesis, and development of mind in its relation to the genesis and growth of the nervous system was worked out in detail, and epecially where the relation borne by the higher and nobler emotions of the mind to its baser and unworthier elements, was brought clearly into view, then it was that the ideal within me struck to the heart, shrivelled and collapsed, and all the flowers that had sprung up in the mind under the genial influence of youth and hope, faded and withered. To exhibit this doctrine of Spencer's in sufficient detail, and to explain how it was that the ideals which had waved and bloomed unheeding over the materialism of my early speculations, and in spite of it, should at the touch of his hand have lain for many a day crushed and cold and dead as if a glacier had passed over them, shall be the aim of the present chapter.

The enthusiasm aroused in me by the perusal of 'First

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Principles,' was chiefly owing to the splendid attempt made in that work by Spencer to show that the whole procession of phenomena in the Universe, the vast miscellany of nebula and star, of sun and planet, of earth and air, of land and sea, of crystal, flower, animal and tree, were deducible as a physical and mathematical corollary from the simple fact that *the quantity of Force in the Universe is fixed and unchanging, and that it exists under the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion.* Now the way in which Mr. Spencer showed that the quantity of force is fixed and unchanging, was by pointing out that this fact was taken for granted in all knowledge, and that on the assumption of its truth all our reasoning was based. For if Force were not always a fixed and unchanging quantity, but could come into existence or go out of it capriciously and without a cause, no reliance could be placed from hour to hour on the weights and measures, the scales and other instruments by which in the last resort our reasonings and conclusions are tested. Thought, in consequence, or the establishment of definite relations between things, could not exist, and all knowledge would be rendered impossible. That the quantity of Force in the Universe therefore is fixed and unchanging, is not so much a proposition to be *proved*, in the ordinary sense of the term, as an absolute *necessity of thought* involved in all proof, and the basis of all proof. And that this Force exists everywhere under the two antagonistic and polar forms of attraction and repulsion, may be seen in every particle of Matter, which will equally resist you whether you try to compress it together or pull it apart.

Now starting from this simple principle of the fixed and unchanging quantity of Force in antagonistic forms — the greatest contribution to philosophy in my judgment since the time of Kant, and the one with the widest range of applicability and implication,—Spencer deduces at once from it as its corollaries some of the most important laws of Physics, as for example that Force follows the line of least resistance or of greatest traction, that all motion is rhythmical, and the like, as

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well as the great scientific doctrine of our age, namely, that the laws of Nature are uniform, and admit of no variability or shadow of change — propositions all of them which were first established by separate scientific inductions on their own account, but which, like the laws of Kepler after the discovery of gravitation, were at once perceived to be necessary corollaries from a fixed quantity of Force in antagonistic forms, when once that great doctrine had been enunciated; the proof that they are corollaries being, in a word, and without going farther into it here, that to deny any one of them would involve the consequence that Force might appear without cause or disappear without result, and this would be to deny the very datum of all thought, namely the fixity and persistence of Force.

If we permit Spencer therefore to start with his fixed quantity of force in antagonistic forms, and to assume this force to be in that diffuse, homogeneous condition, or mist, which modern Astronomy renders probable, he has little difficulty in showing that this homogeneous mass being differently conditioned at the centre and at the circumference respectively, must by reason of the antagonistic traction of its opposing forces, begin to move, then to revolve, and condensing as it revolves, to throw off from its circumference portions of itself as balls and suns, the suns in their turn planets, and the planets, moons; and that coming down to our own system, the earth gradually cooling and contracting must separate into hill and dale, land and water, and in the end, like some great sea breaking in multitudinous waves on the pebbly shores of the world, must by reason of the infinite complexity of its forces, split on its rim and confines into the infinite multiplicity of individual forms with which we are familiar, plant and crystal, animal and flower, and tree.

But the World consists of Mind as well as Matter, of thought and feeling as well as of earth and crystal, of animal, and flower, and tree. Accordingly in the 'Principles of Psychology,' at which I had now arrived, Spencer makes an attempt to show how Mind can be so brought into relation with material things, that

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like light, heat, electricity and other modes or manifestations of Matter and Motion, it, too, may be seen to be a necessary deduction from the fixity and persistence of Force. To do this he has first to find some matrix or material out of which Mind may develop itself, and begins accordingly by pointing out that among the infinite multiplicity of chemical substances into which by reason of its collisions and repulsions, its affinities and attractions, the original homogeneous mass of Matter in the world splits itself, you at last come on one of highly complex composition, and, in consequence, of a high degree of chemical instability. This substance instead of exploding outright like gunpowder, on the impact of any incident force, and so disappearing into other forms, expends the energy communicated to it, on the contrary, in transformations of its own substance, in waves, tremors, or rhythms which pass through its mass, but leave it in the end practically the same as before. Such a substance is albumen, or the protoplasmic specks of jelly of which the lowest organisms are composed. Now whether we consider that such a substance is impelled by some inner prompting to seize its prey or escape from its enemies, or whether, with Spencer, we prefer to think that it has some molecular affinity with or repulsion from its prey and enemies respectively, whereby when they approach it too nearly, like a magnetic needle it turns its head as it were to the one and tail to the other, it is evident that any incident force or disturbance falling on an organism so sensitive, as for example the shadow of a passing enemy, the commotion it makes in the water, or the quality communicated to the water by particles of food floating by, or what not, will set up a molecular movement in the mass, a movement which like the splash of water falling on the ground, will propagate itself at first indefinitely in any or all directions, but which on sufficient repetition will, like the same water continuing to run, tend to follow a definite line, the line of all motion, namely the line of least resistance; say from the point where force is generated by the impact of the enemy's shadow or the proximity of

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food, to the point where it is expended in moving the organism out of the way of danger in the one case, or in enabling it to close around its prey in the other; the special molecules lying in the line along which the vibrations pass, becoming converted, like iron that has had a magnetic current passed through it, into a specially modified kind of tissue known as nerve tissue or nerve. Having got this special kind of vibrating tissue, Spencer sees little difficulty in explaining how the rudiments of mind arise. For just as a mere sound or ordinary noise will if repeated with sufficient frequency, say sixteen times to the second, or thereabouts, give rise to something so apparently different in nature as what we call a musical tone, so what is at first a mere blow or nervous shock, will, he says, when it passes into vibrations of sufficient frequency, become a sensation or feeling.

Having in this way bridged the gulf between Mind and Matter, (and this after all is the very nodus of the problem to be solved) and having got out of his protoplasmic and albuminoid substance, not only nerves but vibrations of these nerves in the shape of sensations and feelings, Spencer has henceforward little difficulty in showing how they both go on developing together as life becomes more complex and difficult; and that just as a cricketer to meet the wide range of velocity, pitch, direction, and distance of the ball, must have an equally wide range of nervous adjustment between eye, hand, muscle and limb, so to cope with enemies coming in all directions, and of all shapes, sizes, colours, velocities and disguises, or to seize prey under the like difficulties, an animal must have a complex nervous system in which lines of nerve shall run in all directions through its body, and connect all its parts together. And just as in some great postal system, besides the smaller out-lying offices there are larger and larger central ones where letters and messages are brought to be sorted and re-dispatched to the points for which they are intended, so in man and the higher animals nerve centres of ever increasing size and complexity up to the central brain

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itself, receive and re-adjust the impressions brought to them from all parts of the organism, and send out responses to meet them, in the shape of thought and action. In this way according to Spencer, Mind arises from the vibrations of nervous molecules; the great variety of thoughts and feelings thus set vibrating to the touch or suggestion of outer things, or from their own inner activity, being but the compounding and re-compounding in more complex centres, of the vibrations of that simple original blow or shock which is the primitive unit of consciousness.

Now the points in the above explanation which I most specially wish to emphasize, either as being the most important in themselves philosophically and in their bearing on the beliefs and opinions of men, or as having had the deepest influence on myself personally at the time are,

First,—That thought, feeling, and sensation, or in a word Mind, arise out of the molecular vibrations of Matter of one species of chemical composition, namely nerve-substance, in the same way as light, heat, and electricity do out of the vibrations of another, as for example iron, copper, and the like; and that both alike are but transformations taking place in the course of evolution in that fixed and unchanging quantity of force in antagonistic forms, from which all things proceed.

Second,—That the only difference in essential nature between one feeling and another, between the lowest animal sensation, for example, and the highest, purest, and noblest emotion, is merely the number and complexity of the molecular vibrations of which they are composed.

Now the first of these doctrines, namely that Mind arises out of the vibrations of the molecules of the brain and nervous system, I already implicitly believed, but only in a very general way, partly as a heritage from my old phrenological days, and partly from the accounts constantly to be met with, of the

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effects on consciousness of injuries to the head, depression of the skull, and the like, and of how the ensuing coma or loss of consciousness was at once relieved by the simple operation of raising the depressed portion of bone; all of which facts seemed to show that there was a real causal connexion between the activity of the brain and the manifestations of thought and intelligence. What Spencer did was to give this doctrine its complete scientific proof and expression, so that to doubt that Mind was bound up with the molecular motions of the brain down to the last fibre of thought and the remotest and most evanescent flutter of sensation, was for the future rendered forever impossible. It was without any feeling of surprise therefore, that I learned from Spencer that just as a piece of iron, cold and dead, can be made to glow with light and heat when its molecules are thrown into vibration by the passage of a current of electricity through it, so the nerves and nerve-centres of the body and brain, cold and unconscious when asleep or at rest, can by a stimulus from within or without,—a vision of beauty, a happy thought, a sweet smile, a poetic landscape,—be set aglow with thought, emotion, and passion. Nor was I disposed to deny the counterpart of this doctrine, namely that no idea or emotion whatever can arise without the expenditure of some physical force; or that other proposition of Spencer, that light, heat, and chemical affinity are as transformable into sensation, emotion, and thought, as they are transformable into each other. All this I was prepared to admit, nor did it disturb me the least to be told that the higher and nobler emotions and sentiments are subject like the lower when under the influence of disease or fatigue, of stimulants, narcotics, or drugs, to fluctuations of rise and fall, to revival or stupefaction, to alternation or eclipse, or indeed to any other consequence that might at first seem to be a derogation from the high dominion of the mind, and its inalienable freedom as a pure immortal spirit. Nothing of all this touched me, and I was already prepared to admit it all or more.

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But what I was not prepared to admit was that between the high and the low, the noble and the base, the false and the true, there was no other difference in essential nature than the number and complexity of the molecular vibrations of which they were composed. For however much one might be disposed to admit that the higher sentiments and emotions are, like the lower, subject to injury or disease, to exhaustion, or to wine, one still felt instinctively that in essential nature between the two there was a great gulf fixed, a *toto cœlo* difference in *kind* and *quality*, which no mere difference in the number of molecular vibrations out of which they arose, could either explain or explain away. Now, in the old phrenological materialism of my earlier days, this difficulty had not arisen, for although all the faculties and emotions alike, the higher as well as the lower, depended for their manifestation on the size and activity of the corresponding portions of the brain, yet such higher faculties as veneration, benevolence, conscientiousness, and the like, were regarded as quite distinct in essential nature from low ones like revenge, lust, vanity, cowardice and conceit, which they had to control and keep in awe, and one could still vaguely feel that somewhere in the circuit of the Universe there must exist some Essence, or Spirit, or what you will, some Power in which they were realized, and which should be their support and guarantee, and be, as it were, the soul and inner reason of their high claims.

With Spencer, on the contrary, all this was changed, for with him all the faculties alike, the high and the low, the noble and the base, the heroic and the self-indulgent, lay on a dead level of moral and spiritual equality, without hierarchy, ranking, or difference, and with no other distinction among themselves save the number and complexity of the molecular vibrations out of which they arose. And just as the differences between light and heat, which are mere differences of molecular vibration in one kind of matter, require no Deity to explain them; neither

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do differences between the high and low, the noble and base, which are but differences in the molecular vibrations of another kind of matter; all alike being explainable as but transformations arising in the course of evolution, of that original fixed and unchanging quantity of Force in antagonistic forms, of which the Universe is composed.

Here indeed was Materialism pure and undiluted, I thought to myself, all alike, the high and the low, the noble and the base, being but vibrations, vibrations, vibrations, nothing more; and at sight of it my spirits fell. Its first and indeed chief effect was to blot out of my life the Ideal itself in which up to that time I had lived, that Ideal whose very existence depends on the distinction which the mind itself makes between the high and the low, the noble and the base, the infinite and the finite, the narrow and confined and the boundless and free, and which gives to life in consequence all that it has of glory and elevation, of richness, of pathos, and of beauty. But now that the mast was shivered whose top it crowned, and over which its banner had so gaily waved, the dethroned Ideal fell prone and headlong on the deck, like a false and usurping spirit; and my mind bereaved of that which had been its life, settled into a deep, and what for a year or two threatened to be a permanent intellectual gloom.

For it all seemed so true, so irrefragable; and the argument washing on its way the extremest shores of Nature, and drawing to itself all the riches they contained, moved to its consummation steadily but irresistibly like some deep ocean stream. One felt it was no mere logical castle this, built of air, and definitions, and assuming in its premises, like the systems of the metaphysicians, the very difficulties to be explained; but a great granite pile sunk deep on the bed-rock of the world, and standing there in its completeness, so hard, so regular, so harmonious, each stone a scientific truth, and all so compacted, dovetailed, and joined together, that nowhere in its well-knit structure could so much as a pin-point be inserted on which a serious demurrer could be

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hung. Indeed on glancing through these works again the other day to refresh my memory of those olden times, I was as much impressed as before with the amazing fertility, originality, and breadth of scientific generalization they displayed; with the great wariness of the mind that appeared through them, and which was as subtle and ingenious as it was broad and comprehensive; as well as with the evidences they afforded of an accuracy, a suggestiveness, and a power of physical observation, which if they had not made Spencer the prince of Scientific Thinkers, must have made him the most eminent of scientific specialists.

With an imagination restricted almost entirely to the relations of material things and forces, or to such aspects of human life as can in any way be reducible into them or construed in terms of them (his theory of literary style even is practically that of Force following the lines of least resistance and taking the shortest cut to its end!), he is apparently almost insensible to those higher and finer intuitions of the mind, which though as fixed and constant in their laws as the material forces, are nevertheless so subtle, so many-glancing, and so evanescent, that when attempted to be roughly seized they escape through the hand, and can only be apprehended by the finest poetic sensibility. But in spite of these natural defects, like those great chess players whose far-sighted combinations of movement and position amaze and perplex the ordinary professors of the game, he has always seemed to me to be in his own line, of all thinkers ancient or modern, the one whose power of analyzing and decomposing, and combining the complex web of Matter, Motion, and Force, is the most incontestable and assured; so that were the Problem of the World an affair merely of Matter, Motion, and Force, and did the solution of its riddle demand merely the unravelling of their infinite complexities, here indeed were the Philosopher would give it us.

As it is, he has in my judgment rendered forever obsolete

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and antiquated the systems of those Materialistic Thinkers who from the days of Democritus and Epicurus downwards, have based their speculations on the imperfect conceptions of their time as to the nature and relations of Matter, Motion, and Force, as well as of those Idealists who have figured the spiritual world in images and analogies drawn from these conceptions; and to those whose time is valuable, both alike, except as ancient history, may, like the old theories of physiology and chemistry, be wiped from the tables of the memory as but hindrances and obstructions to truth. And as for the Spiritual Philosophies of the future, they must, in my judgment, for many years to come, either consent to build themselves on these scientific speculations of Spencer as a foundation (or on something akin to them), or be as if they had never been. As for myself, indeed, neither at the time of which I am writing nor for years afterwards, in spite of the havoc it made of my ideal of the world and of human life, could I detect any essentially weak or imperfect link in the great web of scientific thought and speculation of which these volumes were composed. And it was not until my mind was directed to the question of Spencer's Philosophic Method as distinct from his particular opinions, and especially as to the bearing of this method on the great problems of Religion, that I got my eye on the central fallacies by which his philosophy as a whole was pervaded, and by which in the end, and as a complete Philosophy of Life, it must inevitably fall,—all of which will be exhibited in their proper place as the course of this evolution proceeds.

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CHAPTER II.

ARISTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY.

THE shock which on the voyage my youthful ideals had sustained by the perusal of Mr. Spencer's writings, was not lightened on my landing in Glasgow, for here I was confronted with what I had never before seen, the spectacle of women crowding the gin-shops swearing and blaspheming, and of men, dirty, ragged and unkempt, walking boldly barefoot in the open streets. Nor were matters any better in London where in the twilight dimness of the winter fogs on my way to and from the hospitals, the figures of women in old black shawls, blue and besotted with gin and cold, were to be seen making their way from public-house to public-house like lost and belated spirits. It was not that sights like these were unknown in the great cities of America and the Colonies, but only that I had not myself seen them; for in the town where I was born and brought up, pauperism was unknown, and my only experience of the tramp was the appearance once in several years, perhaps, of some peripatetic and swarthy Italian with monkey and hand-organ, playing for pence and bread from door to door; while during my residence at the University, living far away from the slums and back-streets of the city, if tramps and paupers were to be seen there, I was unaware of their existence.

But in London other experiences of an equally unexpected but less tangible kind awaited me. On my arrival alone and

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without friends I saw little of English life for some time, coming into contact practically only with my landlady and the young men with whom I walked the hospitals; but even through these narrow chinks I soon became aware that I had come to a land where the aims and ideals of men, their categories of moral judgment, and their views as to the relations in which the different classes of society stood to each other, were diametrically opposed to those I had left behind me at home. For the students with whom I came into contact and with whom I tried to enter into friendly relations, though polite and courteous enough, were cold and reserved in manner; and conversation with them, after a pass or two, had a tendency suddenly to collapse into monosyllables; any attempt to carry it outside the limits of a certain conventional circuit, to heighten its pitch, or to give it either a personal or abstract tone, being nipped as by a sudden frost; the echo of your voice being returned to you from these hard and frigid exteriors as from marble vaults. Students without enthusiasm or ideals, sensuous and unaspiring natures, I had indeed left behind me by the score, but here I felt was a something palpably different, and of which at the time I could give no explanation. And still more surprised was I to hear in the outside departments of the hospital, patients spoken to by the young physicians and their assistants in a tone of unconscious *hauteur* and authority that would have raised an insurrection at home; and what was still more amazing to me, to find that to these words of command, delivered as they were in tones of the most perfect calmness, the patients moved as if they were automata. It was in reality the tone and manner of men brought up in an aristocratic state of society with which I had now come for the first time in contact, and it filled me with as much bewilderment and surprise as if I had been suddenly let down into a community of Chinamen or Hindoos.

In democratic communities like America and the Colonies, which are founded on the principle of a common humanity,

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and of the absolute equality of man as man, the mind released from all suspicion or fear of superiority, gives itself up to that genial good-fellowship and craving for sympathy with other minds, which when once all hope of personal domination is absolutely shut out, is the most immediate and pressing desire of the heart. Accordingly as we might expect in so congenial an atmosphere, all the infinite variety of men's moods, feelings, and desires, are invited and even encouraged to come out and sun themselves, like the fauna of some tropical clime; all alike as they happen to arise, without regard to rank or distinction, and without selection, repression, or reserve. The consequence is that in conversation men give themselves up to the expression and interchange of their hopes and fears, their business or pleasure, their private humours, personal curiosity, bodily ailments, what they have eaten and how they have slept, with equal *naïveté* and impartiality; the only limitation put on this wide range of promiscuity, being the ordinary decencies, the sacred reserves of life; and even these, the good Walt Whitman pushing the democratic instinct to its farthest expression, but with perfect purity of intent, would throw open without after-thought, affectation or shame. And further, in the absence of any even the shadow of superiority to coerce or chasten, this wide license of expression is apt to run into all the appointments of life, which as we see among Americans have all this motley variegated character,—their dress, their furniture, their ornaments, their dinner-tables, and more especially their language, which loose, irregular, and unconventional as the variety of angles at which their slouch hats are tilted, has that personal and peculiar flavour which is so characteristic; made up as it is of slang, hyperbole, and picturesque metaphor drawn from the familiar and popular experiences of the race-course and card-table, the minstrel-troupe, the music-hall, and the streets. Now in communities like these, where all the moods, sentiments, and feelings of the mind have an equal right to expression, and where the attempt

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is made so to coerce them down and run them all together that they shall confer no distinction, but like a common highway though open to all shall be the prerogative of none, it is natural that no offence should be more severely punished by public opinion, than any attempt to upset this democratic basis by the assumption of airs of superiority founded on personal pride or reserve, on tone, attitude, speech, or manners, in a word on the pruning and trimming of the sentiments and behaviour. But as in every man the love of distinction and superiority is as strong when once his equality is assured, as is his love of equality while he himself is kept down; and as all attempts to obtain distinction or superiority by the cultivation of a particular manner, tone, attitude, or form of speech, are alike deprecated by public sentiment and opinion, as savouring of old aristocratic pretentions, it is evident that the passion for inequality or distinction must seek satisfaction in the only other way open to it, namely in superiority of knowledge, skill, ingenuity, that is to say in superiority of Intellect as distinct from superiority of Sentiment or Form. And accordingly as we see, in democracies the utmost latitude is allowed for the exhibition and demonstration of individual talent; whether it be physical, mechanical, or professional skill, 'smartness' and success in money-making, or eminence in music, literature, the drama, oratory, or art. But as among such a wide sea of heads all on a level of equality, with no division into classes rising above one another like the seats in an amphitheatre, whereby the rank and quality of each may be clearly seen, every man is so shouldered in among his neighbours as to be in danger of losing his importance and individuality altogether unless by strenuous self-assertion, each one accordingly is permitted to shout aloud and call attention to his talents, as to the wares of his shop, with the entire sympathy and good-will of the bystanders.

Such then are the characteristics of young democracies that have not been grafted on old aristocratic stocks, namely, the

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free expression and interchange in conversation of all feelings, moods, and sentiments alike; the making of intellect and knowledge supreme in public estimation; and the free scope given to personal self-assertion; all of them characteristics of the democratic society in which my own early years were passed; and to these the spirit of aristocracy, as I was soon to discover, opposed itself point to point.

In old aristocracies like England for example, where society was originally founded on force and on the serfdom of the masses, the inequality of rank that naturally grew out of this inequality of conditions, was perpetuated by tradition and sentiment, long after the original power on which it rested had decayed. And as the love of power and domination is always stronger in the human heart when it has a chance to exert itself, than the feeling of sympathy with those who are regarded as inferiors, instead of the universal sympathy with all white men which characterizes democracies, the ruling-classes in aristocracies have a tendency to restrict their sympathies to their own order, and have no desire, but an aversion rather, to interchange feelings and experiences with their inferiors, or to mingle their sentiments in the common human stream. On the contrary they seek by every artifice to set up barriers against such interchange, and in order to distinguish themselves from the masses whom they allow to revel in the free and miscellaneous interchange of whatever mood, sentiment, or feeling chances to arise, surround themselves with an atmosphere of pride and reserve, of choice and selected sentiments, language, and behaviour. For on whatever qualities aristocracies were originally founded, whether on intellectual or spiritual superiority as with the Brahmins and Chinese Mandarins, on industry and money as with the mediæval Italian aristocracies, or on force and land with the concomitants of rank and title as with the existing remnants of feudal aristocracy in Europe, they can only maintain themselves (so long, that is, as the institution of the family lasts as an independent social

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factor), by personal tone, manner, attitude, and speech, or what is known as 'form' or breeding, that is to say by the artistic culture of the sentiments and feelings. And this for various reasons. In the first place that quality in men which a celebrated politician once contemptuously spoke of as 'damned intellect' is always the prerogative of individuals not of families or classes, and to those who share his sentiments the prospect of a motley herd of intellectual tailors, shoe-makers, or other artisans, of needy philosophers, or of broken down *littérateurs* of genius installed in the seats of honour and consideration, would indeed be 'to rock the settled calm of States quite from its fixture'! Besides, the social order arising as it did originally out of a political order in which command on the one hand, and obedience on the other, were the habitual mental states, a certain aloofness, constraint, and reserve had to be put on the outward manifestations of the feelings in order to preserve discipline; as even the most democratic of modern communities still find necessary in the army in the relations between officers and men. And this again has its root in the still more profound truth, that just as we saw in a previous chapter that all high intellectual superiority rests not on over-grown special 'organs,' or on trains of logic, but on the width, depth, and fineness of sympathy and sensibility, that is to say on one kind of feeling; so personal superiority as distinct from merely intellectual, rests for the great masses of men on superiority of tone and sentiment, that is on another kind of feeling. This need not necessarily be a purely spiritual or moral superiority, as we shall see, but rather an artistic or æsthetic one, in which refined and cultured forms of conduct and behaviour whether innate or acquired, shall be habitually turned towards the beholder, to the exclusion or suppression of all that is vulgar, common, or low.

Now this artistic culture of the sentiments, this selection, trimming and pruning, or if you will, even galvanizing of them into fixed attitudes, this art and skill in knowing what you are

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to do or avoid, to think or to feel, to say or refrain from saying on all the occasions of life, is not left to the waywardness of individual caprice, but has always been moulded on one recognised pattern-figure, the figure which in all European countries is known as the 'gentleman.' This is by no means an ideal figure, all of a piece, and an embodiment of all the virtues, holding on high the Ten Commandments like some ascetic of old; for the aristocracy have always permitted to themselves a greater license in affairs of gallantry and the like, than they have allowed to the common herd, and have been little scrupulous in many of the ordinary moralities not essential to their own preservation as a class; but rather a Nebuchadnezzar image, partly of gold and partly of clay, and rising no higher in purity than to the level of the stage of civilization in which it is found; the whole operating on the minds of men not through the inculcation of the Decalogue, but rather by the power of an artistic and interesting personality, in which honour, *esprit*, and elevation of sentiment are artistically combined with the suppression of all that is vulgar, common, or eccentric in manners, or personal and boastful in conversation. If then, as we have seen, in democracies intellectual skill, 'smartness,' knowledge and ability are the points of distinction, the ideal, and object of admiration among men; in aristocracies on the contrary, the ideal and point of distinction is the 'gentleman' with all that the term implies; and all attempts to establish a claim to superiority on merely intellectual grounds, are resisted and contemned as contrary to their essential spirit. So that we have this curious result, that while in democracies public opinion is tolerant of all kinds of intellectual distinction, but not of that which depends on the culture of the sentiments and feelings, in aristocracies on the contrary it is tolerant of all distinctions arising out of rank and birth, or founded on sentiment and feeling, but not of those founded on knowledge, skill, or intellect. A gentleman, as with Charles I., is supposed

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to know as much only as is necessary for a gentleman; the good taste and common-sense in trifles which is so marked and essential an ingredient in his composition, being esteemed not so much as intellectual products (which they in a sense are), as artistic features necessary to the conception and very existence of the figure. The consequence is that to minds thus moving through a certain fixed and definite number of constellations, any wide-ranging enthusiasm for intellectual ideals or abstract culture, for new horizons of moral or spiritual expansion, however much it may be entertained in the private heart (and indeed this must be so in a community which comprises a large Professional and Middle-Class founded on intellect and character as its basis), must not too forcibly intrude itself into general conversation; and if it does, will be met by a certain air of coldness and reserve. Even in those aristocratic groups that are attempting to arise and nourish themselves on a democratic soil, as in some of the American cities like Boston for example, the artistic cultivation of the sentiments and feelings is at bottom made the real point of social distinction, and not mere intellectual superiority as one would have imagined; but owing to the absence of material on which to operate in the shape of 'lower orders' and the like, they have none of the genial character of the older aristocracies, but can exist only by keeping themselves unspotted from the world, or in other words, by coldness, exclusion, negation, and reserve.

Now it was on these characteristics of an aristocratic society that I struck, as on a bed-rock, when in my attempts at conversation with the students at the hospital my youthful enthusiasms were met with so much unaccountable frigidity; and in my friendless isolation in a great city, coming as it did on the blows which my ideal had just recently received from the Spencerian philosophy, it still further depressed my spirits. I felt that the whole tone of sentiment and opinion, the entire way of looking at men and things, was in some way essentially antagonistic to

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that to which I had been accustomed, but as to the reason of it I could form no conjecture. Of the same race and religion and with a common language and ancestry, I could have no conception that there could possibly be any difference in sentiment and opinion between the colonies and the Mother Country; and in my depressed and sensitive humour began to imagine that the fault must be personal to myself; when suddenly one day on my return from the hospital I got my first inkling of how the matter stood, by the entrance into my room of my landlady who with much knowingness and show of contempt, confided in me that one of the lodgers who was in the habit of giving himself great airs of superiority about the house, was no gentleman, as he had actually been guilty of counting his potatos! Now in my time in Canada the word Gentleman was rarely if ever used, and to say that a man was not a gentleman implied that he had been guilty not of 'bad form,' or some breach of conventional propriety, but of positive immorality. But on my best reflection (for my own withers being unwrung in this matter of the potatos, I was able to give myself up to the contemplation of the incident with calmness and impartiality), I could not for the life of me understand why a man's counting his own potatos should make him no gentleman; when suddenly it began to dawn on me that the word must be used in some special and esoteric sense to which I had not yet found the key; and this sense, as I afterwards discovered, was that of the trimmed and cultured personality we have just seen, whose artistic and refined manner and behaviour were the hall-mark that distinguished him from the vulgar throng, who, on the other hand, by rolling and disporting themselves in the expression and exhibition of every sentiment that happened to come to the surface of their minds, cut themselves off from grace as by inevitable decree.

Associated with this aristocratic spirit, partly as direct effect and partly as historic survival from an earlier time, was another phenomenon of society which cut still more directly into the inexperienced ideals of my youth, already so deeply scarred and

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trenched by the philosophic scepticism of Spencer; and this was the condition and outlook of the Working Man. In the Colonies, where democratic sentiment covered the whole field of human activity, and where all men alike were free and equal, the working man after his day's work was done, was in no way to be distinguished from the general body of citizens, but moving freely among them, took part in all the affairs of the community with perfect equality, in no way marked off from the rest of his fellows in dress, manners, dialect, or personal dignity. But in London I was confronted with the spectacle of working men appearing in the street, in public places, at their clubs, and at lectures in their ordinary working clothes, speaking a different dialect from the other classes of society, and instead of mingling freely with them, separated off from them as it were in special compartments, in railways, restaurants, theatres and other places of public resort; and more than all, so subdued apparently by the traditions in which they had been brought up, and by their own belief in the inherent superiority of the classes above them, that in token of the same they were to be seen touching their hats and taking 'tips' in open day and without shame. Now all this was to me so new, so strange, so unaccountable, that appearing as it did in men whom I soon recognized to be otherwise so robust, manly and brave, it fell on my mind like a stain; and living as I did entirely in the high ideals of the mind, and not in the calculations of any merely pecuniary or sensuous good, it was as if the human mind itself had suffered some inherent degradation. But long before I could give any satisfactory explanation of it to myself, it had produced a quite peculiar speculative effect on a subject no less remote from the sublunary concern out of which it grew, than that of the immortality of the soul.

For in America and the Colonies generally, where all men alike are equal, independent, and free, the bright and unfettered dominion of the mind, its free elevation and expansion, which result from there being nothing between it and high heaven

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to crush or subdue the spirit, give to every man the appearance of an illimitable nature to which no boundaries are visible. That such a nature should be immortal was readily conceivable without any breach of continuity, and whatever difficulties in consequence the doctrine of the immortality of the soul might meet with from the physical or material side, it could meet with none from the nature of man himself. But in England where men were distributed into classes whose opinions and prejudices and the circuit of thought and sentiment in which they moved, and beyond which like rooted trees they could not pass, were easily surveyable on all sides, the nature of man seemed to lose its illimitable character; and I kept saying to myself as I went along, these are not immortal spirits, there is no immortality of the soul! It was a strange conclusion, I admit, to have arisen out of an environment so foreign to itself as the relations in which the different classes of a particular country stood to each other; but from the first real glimpse which I got that the nature of man was not, as I had thought, illimitable and free, it followed of necessity, sinking into my mind and still further depressing my ideal of life, and curiously colouring the course of my general speculations during the immediately succeeding years.

It is true that in Canada we had the negro, but for the time I had quite forgotten him; for he was regarded by us young men at least as something so peculiar and apart, that we took little or no thought of him; and when we did, we vaguely felt that if immortality were to be his lot, it would be in some separate compartment of heaven, as it had already been on earth! From which it is evident that we were as much the creatures of tradition and opinion in the Colonies as in England, the only difference being that in the Colonies public opinion being a universal and homogeneous element, pressed so evenly on all sides of us that like the air we breathe or the water in which the fishes swim, we were almost unconscious of its existence. For my part it was not until I had been transported

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to the quite different and as we have seen, quite antagonistic social order of England, that I got a second point of view outside of myself from which to see myself, and so became aware of my former slavery. But when once I got my eye on it, then dissolved for ever like a transformation scene, that fond illusion, not only of youth, but of the unreflecting, the uncultivated, and the untravelled everywhere, the illusion, namely, that all the settled arrangements and institutions of society—its Church and State, its hierarchies, authorities, and powers, as well as the creeds, beliefs, and prejudices in which men are brought up,—have their roots in eternal nature and have been there from all time; and in its place arose the perception (of so much importance, as we shall see, in political, and social speculation), that all these are fugitive and temporary, have had their causes and origins and will have their decease, and that having arisen originally out of a few simple elements of character and environment, they are as predicable, so long as these last, as are the movements of sheep before the shepherd; all individual prejudices, sentiments, and beliefs being driven before these, their life and soul, as snow-flakes before the wind. But this is to anticipate, and I must return.

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CHAPTER III.

MEDICINE.

FOR some years after my arrival in London, with the view of supplementing the mere book knowledge in which we Canadian students were more than usually proficient, by the medical knowledge of the bedside, I was in the habit of walking the hospitals daily; not attaching myself to any one in particular, but moving freely to and fro among them all; now giving myself up unreservedly to some distinguished clinical teacher here, now to some distinguished therapeutist there, now listening to the bedside talks of Sir William Jenner at University College, now attending the operations of Sir William Ferguson at King's; at one time, and for long periods together, taking courses on special subjects such as diseases of the heart or lungs, diseases peculiar to women and children, and the like, and then returning again to the wards of the general hospitals to take survey of the whole field. But in all these activities it was entirely on the practical that my thoughts were bent, on what was solid, demonstrable, and if possible predicable in Medicine and disease, and not on what was still in the air and in the region of hypothesis merely. For Medicine as an Art, that is to say, in so far as it was a practically limited body of principles which remained stationary over any one decade or generation, and which were to be applied day after day to the same or similar cases in wearisome

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routine, I had no inclination; for from the time when my mind was first fired with the ambition for literary and philosophic distinction, the thought of having to spend my life either in threshing away at the same old straw of theological dogma like the preachers, or ringing the changes on the same old stock of motives involved in crime like the lawyers, or like the doctors feeling pulses and looking at tongues from youth to age, came over my mind with a special and peculiar horror. I had been taken possession of for the time being, I may remind the reader, by a rapacious and exorbitant ideal which would be satisfied with no theme that did not give infinite scope for speculation and thought. And although one might have imagined that in Medicine the wide *penumbra* of misty and unproven hypothesis which surrounds its small nucleus of fixed and definite truth, might have afforded me a wide enough field, yet this in reality was not what I wanted. For with the ideal within me bruised and crushed by the Spencerian materialism which now lay on my spirits like the night, and with the great world of Nature and Human Life lying around me and waiting to be explored, if haply by some deeper perception of its workings I might shift and dislodge the incubus that was pressing on my heart, I had not the time to give to mere speculations on the origin and nature of disease, which even if reduced to truth, could in no way affect the solution of the great problems that were uppermost in my mind. Neither could I consent to devote myself to the long and patient investigation necessary if one would help on the advance of Medicine as a Science in even the smallest of its many branches and subdivisions. For what in my youthful ardour I most desired, was some problem or theme which would engage the *whole* mind, with all its armoury of intellectual and spiritual weapons—analogy, observation, penetration, intuition,—and which would allow it to move along these from point to point in endless perspective, weaving its own web as it went along; some theme that would admit of a free unimpeded

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flight down the wind of thought, unclogged by earthly details, and exempt from the necessity of waiting for a full and complete explanation of physical Nature, before it could begin; some problem in a word, which should allow of its secrets being penetrated from the side of the mind and its laws—those laws in which I was immersed when the Philosophy of Spencer fell on me out of the blue sky, dashing my ideal, and breaking up for the time being the ordered continuity of my thought. And such a theme was the great Problem of the World and of Human Life, and in my then mood and temper nothing less would content me as worthy to claim the devotion of a life.

Now Medicine in so far as it is a department of Physical Science, has to do with the human body as a part of Nature merely, and like all Physical Science has to deal with an infinite complex of forces,—physical, chemical, mechanical, electrical, vital,—the laws of whose action can never be anticipated or known beforehand by any combination of mere thought however subtle or far-reaching, but on the contrary must await the slow and dilatory results of observation and experiment; in this respect differing entirely from Poetry and Philosophy which on the self-same basis of physical Nature, can rear, as has so often been seen, vast pyramids of truth by the combinations of individual genius alone. In other words, while in Philosophy a single mind of sufficient power can, like a great chess-player, by new combinations of the same old pieces make vast advances in thought; in Physical Science and Medicine on the other hand, the smallest general advance can only be made by an innumerable body of workers stretching athwart the field like an army, and under the guidance and inspiration of some great general principle to direct their labours—Gravitation, the Atomic theory, Natural Selection, the Germ theory, Evolution, and the like—breaking up the soil in every quarter of the field, and so gradually reducing the recalcitrant phenomena of Nature to order and law. But as it is not once in a generation or perhaps in a

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century even, that the existing stage of scientific progress is ripe for the new generalization of a Newton, a Darwin, or a Pasteur, it is evident that in these scientific labours Speculation can have no unimpeded flight along the mental lines of analogy, intuition, and poetic interpretation, but on the contrary, confronted at every turn with unconquered facts whose laws and causes have still to be explored, must, like the snake in Goethe's 'Tale,' ever bend itself to the earth again before it can make the smallest advance. And hence it is that not only in Medicine but in all the Physical Sciences you have the spectacle of thousands of diligent and conscientious workers spending their lives in observing and reporting each some small section of the vast and unexhausted field, and with their microscopes, telescopes, stethoscopes, spectroscopes, and the rest, moving athwart the broad expanse of Nature like an army of locusts (beneficent and not destructive), analyzing, decomposing, separating, and breaking up the gross concreteness of things into their elemental forms; content to spend their lives in this pursuit, if so be they may add some genuine contribution however small, to that common stock of knowledge which is necessary before the next great general advance is possible; but of whom the most alas! are condemned to die before the promised land is in sight. But in spite of my natural love of reality, and the fascination which Nature and her processes had always exercised over my mind, I could not reconcile myself to making any one or other of the departments of Science or Medicine, the object of my life's devotion. What with the great Problem of Life to which I had already dedicated myself, lying still unsolved before me, and with the Spencerian Philosophy pressing on me like a nightmare; what with the limited scope that any special department of Science permits for the free exercise of the whole range of mental faculties, and with an exorbitant ideal which would be satisfied with nothing less as its province than the whole interests of Man; what with the fact that I had taken as the basis and ground-

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work of my thinking, the doctrine of Evolution which was not to be affected in any of its greater implications by any minor scientific discovery; what with all these, and other subordinate considerations, it was impossible that I should give the full allegiance of my mind to Medicine. And accordingly when one of our most distinguished physicians made me the offer of collaborating with him in certain scientific investigations, the results of which were to be published under our conjoint names, and assured me at the same time that if I accepted his offer it would lead almost to a certainty in a year or two to a chair as lecturer in one or other of the medical schools, I felt obliged to decline the kind and all too generous proposal. That it was the parting of the ways, and would decide the entire course of my after years I was well aware, but in spite of the material and professional advantages that would have accrued to me from my acceptance of it, it was without hesitation or afterthought that I deliberately chose Philosophy as my bride, content to endure with her whatever in the future might befall.

But while neither Medicine as an art, requiring the application of a limited set of principles to the endless details of practice, nor Medicine as a science, involving the patient and laborious work of adding to these principles in some one or more sections of its wide field, could in my then state of mind secure my full and free allegiance, I was nevertheless deeply interested, as I have already said, in all those truths which were immediately practical, which had stood the test of time and were no longer in the region of hypothesis; or in other words, in Medicine in so far as it was a system of truths capable of demonstration, prediction, and verification. I was not slow, therefore, to avail myself of the labours of others, and not only tried to make myself master of the grosser symptoms and signs of disease, but looked out eagerly for those finer *minutiæ* of distinction among symptoms, which pointed to subtler shades of disorder, and which were not to be had from books.

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And as the great difficulty was to get a grasp of the hierarchy of symptoms, or in other words to determine out of a long catalogue, which were the significant and which the unimportant, I was greatly interested in what I may call the physiognomy of disease. For just as individual character is to be read, not by any mere inventory or catalogue of features however accurate or complete, but by the *ensemble* of features, out of which a fine intuitive perception is always able to pick the one or more that gives the key to the character, so among a great complication of symptoms, some of them perhaps apparently mutually conflicting, to decide which are the significant and important, and which the subsidiary or unimportant, requires in addition to the knowledge of the grosser elements, an intuitive perception of those indefinable elements which constitute what may be called the physiognomy of disease. To attain this knowledge which is the last refinement of the physician's art, I made a point of assiduously attending the post-mortem examination of patients I had seen in the wards, with the view of ascertaining accurately the exact nature of the disease from which they had been suffering, in order that I might connect it with the symptoms, physiognomy, and general appearance in life. I also went from hospital to hospital to attach myself to those physicians who either from their special knowledge or exceptional insight, were most likely to give me what I wanted. These were usually the older heads in the profession, men who dealt little in mere theory, but whose knowledge was of that wary, intuitive, unwritten, and scarcely communicable kind which only long experience can give, and which therefore was not so common among the younger men. The difference between the two cannot perhaps be better conveyed to the reader, than by the reply of an old physician to a freshling who with all the latest theories and newest remedies at his finger-ends, was inclined banteringly to reproach the elder with being an old fogey who had lost touch somewhat, and was just a little behind the times. 'These new things' replied the other 'which you

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know but of which I am ignorant, you have only to tell me, and I shall then know them as well as you, but the things that I know and of which you are ignorant, it would take me years to teach, and you years to learn.'

Of the present Method of Medicine, that is to say of the way in which it sets out to discover the laws and causes of disease, one cannot speak too highly. Discarding alike all those old *à priori* conceptions under which it at one time worked, such for example as the homœopathic and allopathic shibboleths, the doctrine of 'vital spirits' and the belief in the beneficent or malign influences of certain organs, as the liver, spleen, heart, (all of which metaphysical or semi-theological conceptions served like concealed magnets to deflect the mind from its native affinity to truth) it has thrown itself once for all entirely and unreservedly on observation and experiment alone; working on true Baconian lines in all its departments, mental as well as physical; now by crucial experiment distinguishing real causes from mere coincidences; now by the method of exclusion reducing what is vague and hypothetical to greater definiteness and certainty; now isolating organs and functions with the view of keeping their separate influences distinct and apart; and now by comparison, classification, and generalization, bringing all this knowledge to a point, and so rearing still higher the pyramid of truth; and at each point in the process surrounded and ministered to by a whole armoury of instruments—microscopes, stethoscopes, ophthalmoscopes, and the rest—which are fitted to penetrate and lay bare the secrets of the most hidden parts. And if the progress of Medicine is impeded, and the zeal of its votaries restrained for the time being, in these islands, by the restrictions put on the practice of vivisection—a practice by the way, which by the opportunities it gives for free experimentation, and for the application of the Baconian method to creatures allied physically to ourselves, is of all instruments of research the most potent for the discovery of those deeper causes of disease which lie immediately before

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us—if, in our endeavours to put restrictions on the abuse of this practice, we have perhaps overshot the mark and put restrictions on its legitimate use, it still goes forward nevertheless in other lands (so immoral is Nature when she has her own ends to attain), lands where owing partly to race, and partly to the traditions of despotism out of which their peoples have scarcely yet emerged, there are wanting those finer sentiments of humanity and pity which are a barrier to its practice here.

But while the *method* of Medicine equally with that of Physical Science generally, is the true one, and the results attained, like the Pyramids or coral-reefs, great and enduring, the mental symmetry of the vast army of workers by whom the great edifice is being reared, is (as Darwin himself pointed out), like the backs of the old Egyptian slaves, sacrificed to it; and their culture in consequence rendered one-sided and incomplete. It is not in every generation or even century, as I have said, that an all-embracing law like Evolution or Gravitation is ripe for discovery; and in the meantime accordingly, the rank and file of the scientific army stretching athwart the field of Nature, and moving forward under the command of their captains to the beat and inspiration of the last great scientific conception, are engaged each with the *minutiæ* of his own special work, analyzing, dividing, combining, and breaking up the soil on which he is occupied, for the better exhibition of its constituents and laws; the very air above them thick with the mist and smoke of hypothesis arising during the progress of the work, which ever again collecting, the winds of each new day are for ever blowing away. And hence it is that each man with the exception of the greater generals of division, being confined to his own narrow plot, there is little scope for those great general views without which culture must ever be partial and incomplete; such generalizations as chance to be turned up by each in the course of his labours, covering rather his own special mole-hill of thought like a night-cap, than like a canopy over-arching the whole field. And when at

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last these individual contributions piled up along the line of march, begin to unite their borders and to inter-penetrate, fertilize, and throw light on each other, some great general like Newton, or Spencer, or Pasteur, casting his eye along the line, announces the new law of gravitation, evolution, the germ theory, or what not, to which all the facts are seen to conform; the old banner is then taken down, the new one is hoisted in its place, and under its fresh inspiration the vast army led by its generals and its greater officers of division, moves onwards as before.

But the violence done to the culture of the individual workers in Medicine or Science involved in this comparative restriction of their field of vision, is quite neutralized and compensated by the wonder and sense of illumination that attends the observation and discovery of even the smallest of Nature's real operations, as well as by the endless artifices and ingenuities to which recourse must be had before the smallest new truth can be dragged from its hiding place. And in spite of the limitation of its subject-matter to what is purely physical and material, or to what can only be got at through the medium of physical and material organization, Medicine, like Physical Science, has its compensations in the training it gives to the mind in habits of accurate observation, in patience, in the suppression of personal bias, and the elimination of the personal equation, in the keeping, in a word, the wheels of the mind, in Bacon's phrase, concentric with the wheels of Nature. But its chief merit at the present time is the healthy scepticism it engenders in reference to a state of opinion in which the operations of Nature are still encumbered by a whole metaphysical and theological over-growth of divine inter-positions, special providences, six days' creations, metaphysical entities, and other the like superstitions of the vulgar, which serve only to pervert and obscure the truth.

The effect on my mind of all this study of medicine, was still farther to deepen the Materialism which the Spencerian

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Philosophy had fastened on me, and to choke outright those few remaining avenues and approaches to the Ideal, which that philosophy had still left open. If I had ever had any doubts as to the intimate and entire dependence of all mental states whatever on conditions of the brain and nervous system, they had long since been dissipated by my experiences of the hospital wards and post-mortem rooms; and as I walked to and fro between the hospitals, meditating on the bearings of all this medical knowledge on the great Problem of Life on which I was engaged, I kept saying to myself, if we are ever again to have a high Spiritual Philosophy of the World which shall give satisfaction alike to the deeper intuitions of the mind and heart, it must be by a frank acceptance once for all, of this dependence of all thought and emotion whatever on physical states, and not by seeking to contradict, dodge, or ignore this truth; it must be reared, in a word, on Materialism as its groundwork and basis; must be seen to grow out of Materialism as the flower from its root, and not apart from and independent of it. At this period of my life, however, I was far indeed from dreaming that such a Spiritual Philosophy would ever again dawn on me. The habit of looking on human beings as bodies merely, which the constant familiarity with illness and disease had a tendency in my then mood to induce in me, still further depressed my spirits; for this attitude of the hospital I carried with me into the street, and the men and women whom I passed or with whom I conversed, became to me but a series of medical cases, healthy or diseased, of material substances merely, in better or worse repair. This materialistic way of looking at human beings, following closely as it did, on the blows which my mind had but recently sustained from the Spencerian Philosophy, wiped and blotted out from my life for the time being, the last lingering traces of the Ideal which had survived there; and in the ensuing gloom, unirradiated by any star, my spirit falling, falling, touched at last the bottommost deep of unbelief and despair. Search

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where I would, nowhere was the lost Ideal to be found. If I looked out into the Universe, there a fixed quantity of Force breaking on its confines into individual conscious existences not by any Divine decree but by the cold inhuman pull of opposing forces merely, moved through the dark abyss of Space as through the waste and empty night, and reigned as in Eternal Silence without a God. If I looked into the human mind, there the noblest and divinest emotions of the soul were no more than the rhythm or explosions of nervous forces making their way through the higher nerve-centres of the brain along lines of least resistance, and the like; and dying away again when these explosions out of which they arose, had spent themselves. If I looked into society around me, there too, human beings separated from each other as by Egyptian castes, like beings of different spheres, looked hopelessly through the intervening distance at one another from behind the barriers of fixed ideas in which, like the lost souls in Dante, their spirits were confined, and around which as in great cages they continued forever to turn, like slowly revolving wheels. If I looked into the streets, there too the most engaging personalities lost their charm, and men and women having like myself lost their souls, walked about like material corpses merely; even the beauty of woman, to which I had always been most susceptible, turning its wrong side out as I looked at it, and under the blight of an eye from which the ideal had departed, losing its bloom and fading as at the touch of some devilish and invisible hand. Wherever I looked the bright landscape of life turned itself into a desert, around and about which I wandered as in a dream, ever and again to wake up and ask myself, in a moan of bereavement and despair, where now is that bright ideal of life which encompassed me in the days when with my philosophic friend I walked radiant beneath the sweet-smelling pines by the river's bank, as in the groves of Academe? Where now that promise, believed in as the love of plighted hearts, which both Nature and my

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own soul gave me, and which I took so seriously, that promise which music and heroic story foretold when the blood was thrilled, and which like the rainbow, more glorious than the world it spanned, the more it receded the more it was pursued? Where was it now? Gone, as Desdemona's love to Othello's mind, and I was abused; and with it all the beauty and glory of the world it presaged. Gone now, and some of them forever gone, those illusions that played like glancing lights around the personalities and interests, the toys and ambitions of the world, and which lent them all or mostly all their charm. Did a vision of beauty rise before me, I immediately turned it into dust and worms, or thought of how its glowing eye or cheek would show under the microscope. Of Intellect,—I at once thought of the difference in number, size, and activity of the nervous cells that alone constituted its distinction from dullness and stupidity. Of Heroism,—I figured it as for the most part but duller nerves merely, or livelier bubbles in the blood. Of Virtue, Honour, Duty—pshaw! they were either phantasms, words, or false impositions, as with Falstaff, or but cunningly devised fables of man's invention for the furtherance of his own selfish designs, but having in them no touch or effluence of the Divine. Whatever, in a word, of greatness, goodness, or beauty my eye looked upon, was poisoned by my own mind before I could touch it, or taste it, or enjoy it. For years I can truthfully say I never rose from a book without a sense of pain and desolation, however eagerly while reading it I may have enjoyed it; and in all this undertone of misery the ground note was ever the same—the worthlessness of life and the vanity of mortal things. *Cui bono?* what is the good? was the ever-renewed refrain that with its sullen monotone of despair rounded in the close of every train of thought, every new-sprouting ambition, every resolve. That I had these resolves and ambitions was true, in spite of the general undertone of gloom; for my mind was young then, and ideal or no ideal, would start more hares of speculation and fancy in a night than it could run down in a

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lifetime; so light and irrepressible are youth and vanity! With a temperament naturally buoyant, little of all this gloom appeared in society or conversation, but when I was alone, in those solitary hours of contemplation and study in which our best thoughts and aspirations take their rise, I looked out on this wilderness of blasted ideals, and was confronted with this vacant night in which there were no stars.

It was not surprising therefore that in this peculiar mood and humour, my outward and merely worldly fortunes should have given me little concern. I had now been walking the hospitals regularly for a year or two, taking little or no thought of the morrow, when my originally small stock of capital began to show signs of giving out, and I was compelled at last to bestir myself. Accordingly, taking rooms with a friend in the West End, I began the practice of medicine on my own account; but after fruitlessly waiting for another year or two, during which time I continued assiduously my work at the hospitals, my means became so exhausted that but for the temporary assistance of my friend I should have been seriously embarrassed. While I was engrossed in my philosophical dreams the keel of my little bark had actually grazed the bottom, and was threatening to stick hopelessly fast there, when all at once fortune, in the opportune, but, to one so young, quite unusual shape of a handsome legacy from a grateful patient, came to my assistance and set me on my feet again; thus enabling me to hold out in the struggle both with external circumstances and with my own mind, for some years to come.

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PART II.

ENGLAND.

BOOK II.

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MY INNER LIFE,

BEING A CHAPTER IN

PERSONAL EVOLUTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

PART II.—ENGLAND.

BOOK II.—THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST IDEAL.

MACAULAY.
A FALSE START.
ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY.
SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.
MODERN METAPHYSICS.
CRITICISMS AND CONCLUSIONS.
A VISIT TO CARLYLE.
THE PERSONAL EQUATION.
POETIC THINKERS.
MY CONTRIBUTION.

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CHAPTER I.

MACAULAY.

SITTING one beautiful sunny morning in Spring beneath the ancient elms that led up from the highway to the old country-house in Kent where for the time I was residing, there suddenly came over my mind a resolve which doubtless had for some time been silently maturing itself there, the resolve, namely, that now that my duties to my patient would leave me ample time for meditation and study, I would instead of wandering aimlessly about the intellectual world, concentrate my whole mind on the one supreme object of removing if possible by some deeper insight than I had yet attained, the manifold spiritual burdens and contradictions that were oppressing me, burdens and contradictions under which I imagined many others besides myself must of necessity be lying. It was now two years or more since I first made acquaintance with the Spencerian Philosophy, and so far I had not been able to detect any inaccuracy in its facts, any fallacy in its reasoning, any rent or breach in the seams of its compact and well-built structure. And yet I felt that there was something wrong with it somewhere, and my hope was that even if I could not dispose of its separate facts and reasonings, I might still by some new way of looking at them, some new arrangement or combination of them, some fresh turn given to them, bring back that harmony and concord to the mind, which

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I had lost. Surely, I said to myself, the constitution of things must have some satisfactory answer to give to the questions which that very constitution has raised; and if so, then the Ideal which lay crushed within me, and which on any theory of Evolution had been bred and nurtured by the environment, must by a deeper reading of that environment find again the spirit or soul which produced it, and which in the theory of Mr. Spencer it had lost. It was with a kind of white intensity of earnestness therefore, that I sat myself down to lay siege to the problem before me, resolved not to rise from it, so long at least as my means held out, until I had conquered it.

But where to begin? where to make a fresh start? I could no longer in my perplexity fall back on the old weapons of the orthodox creed, for was not one of the first effects of the Spencerian Philosophy to kill outright for me any remnant of value or credibility that may still have attached to that creed? Nor was I at all inclined to seek assistance from the Metaphysics or Philosophy of the Schools; for with the remembrance of Locke and Descartes, of Hamilton and Mill, in my mind, I had a shrewd suspicion, justified as we shall see farther on, that all these pre-Darwinian philosophers, great and admirable though they were, were swallowed up and superseded by Spencer himself. And as for the more recent seers, Coleridge, Carlyle, and Emerson, my remembrance of the difficulty I had had in understanding the 'Sartor Resartus' of the one, and the 'Representative Men' of the other, was sufficient to deter me from turning to them for help for some time to come. Where then was I to turn? To first-hand observation of Nature and of men my own inclination prompted me, but as this is not always available, but only in glimpses and at long intervals, I was glad in the meantime to supplement the paucity of direct observation by the more concentrated and accessible treasures of books; and accordingly without further delay embarked on a voyage of intellectual discovery, on a circumnavigation of the world of thought.

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I began, I remember with the Essayists, partly in search of definite points of insight, partly on account of their discursiveness and the variety of topics with which they dealt, which enabled me to pick out what most interested me without the fear of protracted boredom, but chiefly, perhaps, because I imagined they would serve as finger-posts to direct me to those greater names of the past who were most likely to give me what I required.

The first of the Essayists I chanced to take up was Macaulay, and although I found him powerless to help me to the solution of the great problems of the world that were oppressing me, nevertheless open him where I would I was speedily drawn within the currents of his attraction, and swept down along with him to the end. Every page was ablaze with the jewelled tropes that as we went along turned up their gleaming sides to the light in the fierce noon-tide glare under which all was exposed, and as I sat amid it all dazzled and enchanted, I was content to be borne along without effort on a stream which carried on its bosom a vaster freightage of literary and historical erudition than any I had yet known; and which in a way carried all before it. In the higher ranges of thought he was, indeed, sadly limited, more limited perhaps than any other writer who has climbed so high and enjoyed so long and universal a popularity. On all those great problems of the world and of human life which for the last hundred years have been agitating and perplexing the minds of men, problems which at the time when he began to write had already emerged on the horizon and stood around him confronting him like sphinxes, he has uttered no word, and either has no solution to offer or has fallen back on his early creed. The great mysteries of existence, of good and evil, of life and death, of time and eternity seem to have awakened no echo in his soul; and in the presence of that great empire of silence, immensity, and night, with which our little islet of knowledge is surrounded, and in which it lies embosomed, instead of bending before it in awe-

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stricken humility like Pascal and Carlyle, he walks abroad amid it all, hat on head, viewing it with unembarrassed complacency as if with it he had no concern. Nowhere in his writings so far as I remember, is there any hint that he had ever felt the pathos of human life, the 'sense of tears in mortal things'; nowhere does he disclose any poetic melancholy, any tenderness of imagination, any dreamy moonlight fancy, any depth or elevation of sentiment, any of those exquisite aromas of the imagination, in a word, which like the bouquets of the choicest wines, are unanalyzable and incommunicable; and which exhale from the writings not only of poets like Shakspeare, Milton, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Keats, but of prose writers like Ruskin, Emerson, Carlyle, Pascal, Senancour, Loti, giving to each his characteristic and peculiar charm. With gaps like these not only in the range and depth but in the fineness and delicacy of his sensibilities, one would expect to find corresponding limitations in his general powers of thought. For it must never be forgotten that these highest sympathies and sensibilities in which he was so lacking, are not as he would have us believe, mere feelings of the mind, sublimated and refined perhaps by culture but bred and begotten of vulgar hopes, superstitions and fears; mere poetic dreams which with the advance of Science and enlightenment must wither and fade away; but are, rather, real higher senses which emerging on the outermost rim of evolution, are the standpoint of interpretation and key to all the lower faculties of the human mind, as these in turn are to those of the brutes; they are real inner lights, inner senses we may call them, which by the subtle alchemy of Nature have been distilled from lower forms and constitute what is called genius, giving to their possessors a power of penetrating the secrets of the special sides of Nature to which they are allied, which is beyond the reach of any combinations of the understanding, however ingenious or profound.

It is little wonder therefore, that this deficiency of Macaulay

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in the higher sensibilities of the mind, higher senses we may call them, should be seen in all his performances,—his philosophy, his poetry, his history, his criticism and his style. Nowhere, indeed, in his philosophy does he rise above the region of commonsense and commonplace. For although he had ransacked the belts of thought from the equator to the poles, and although his prodigious memory had laid all the riches of literature and poetry at his feet, to be used as occasion required, for precedent, for argument, for analogy, for illustration, for ornament, still in his own innermost thoughts he lived and moved habitually in that comparatively narrow belt of intellectual interest, that temperate zone of practical activity in which secular progress and material prosperity are the ends, political machinery the means, and public and private virtue and liberty the reward. Accordingly, when stripped of the rhetoric, the historical and literary allusion and metaphor which his over-laden memory sheds around him as he goes along, and which give his thoughts a kind of meretricious splendour, you find beneath it all, the figure of the slashing political leader-writer, the slashing literary reviewer, a kind of first-class House of Commons debater, a Philistine (of culture indeed) who from out of the dust of antique archives will interest and detain you by the hour together in proving to you that Charles I. was not the sainted martyr he was supposed to be, that Bacon though a great philosopher, was a mean man, and that the times of Charles II. were the most disgraceful in our annals. And accordingly when Bacon, whose magnificent genius he celebrates for pointing the way to the realization of those secular dreams which he had so much at heart, when Bacon, I say, gives evidence of his real genius for speculation by ascending to the very fountain head of Philosophy itself, and pausing there for a moment, proceeds to announce the subtle laws which play through this high region of the sympathies and sensibilities, and which unite them by a deep inner unity to the ordinary laws of physics, chemistry, morals

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and society (a unity which the most ordinary reader of Spencer can now find demonstrated for him), Macaulay opens his eyes on it all as on so much moonshine, attributes it to an imagination which in its excess has become diseased, and stalking over it as over a flower-bed with brutal ruthlessness, tramples it down and disposes of it all with a complacent cocksureness which would have been intolerable had it not been so evidently honest and sincere.

And yet when his own philosophy peeps out here and there along his pages, we find him devoting long paragraphs to the elaboration of such platitudes and commonplaces for example, as that the advance of liberty is not a steady and continuous movement but like the incoming tide is an alternate one of advance and retrogression; or this, that men must be gradually educated to liberty as the bandaged eye must be to light; or that other strange doctrine of his, that as the judgment strengthens the fancy and imagination decay, and that, in consequence, with the advance of science and enlightenment Poetry must first decline and then pass away. In working out this curious theory which is perhaps the main article of his literary creed, reappearing as it does in almost the same form in the essays on Milton, Dryden, and Bacon, one sees at once that he regards poetry not as an exhibition of the connexion and interplay of the higher sensibilities among themselves, nor of their connexion with the lower passions of the soul, not, that is to say, as a higher kind of judgment or criticism of life, but rather, as we have already seen, as a mass of mingled hopes, superstitions and fears, bred in the darkness and in the infancy of knowledge, but which on the dawn of Science shall like the ghost in Hamlet melt and fade away. Now it is no doubt true that with the decay of Greek Mythology there will be no more Iliads, with the downfall of Satan no more Paradise Losts, or of Mediæval Catholicism no more Infernos, but to dream that when Science shall have killed all these as well as the Jack the Giant-Killers of our childhood, to dream, I say, that those

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mystic faculties of the soul which give birth to poetry and of which these superstitions are but an early fruitage, shall themselves disappear, is itself, perhaps, the most singular superstition in the history of letters. As well imagine that the life of the tree must go with the fruitage of the season, and of the vine with the vintage of the year, as that the poetry of Othello must die with the belief in the magic virtues of the handkerchief, or of Hamlet and Macbeth with that of their ghosts and witches! But one can scarcely do justice to views like these, and it only shows us how much Macaulay has lost in losing those higher sensibilities of the mind. For although he is a master of pause and cadence, of smoothness, terseness and vigour, and although like all men of culture he knows a sublime image or pathetic touch when he sees it (as even the most flinty-hearted of men may know the significance of tears), still he has not strength enough in the higher sympathies and sensibilities to maintain himself permanently in their region, to share their life and become part, as it were, of their being, and so in his own writings to give off their peculiar fragrance and perfume. And in his criticism of the poetry of others although his excellent commonsense makes him quick to detect such grosser forms of bad workmanship as slovenly or involved lines, faulty metre, vulgar or tawdry metaphors, ridiculous affectations or conceits, and although too, his immense memory at once enables him to detect the most remote suspicion or shadow of plagiarism; still, having little or no sense of the Ideal in himself, he dwells rather on the mechanical differences of the images used—as for instance as to whether they are vague and shadowy like those of Milton, or pictorial and precise like those of Dante, —than on those delicate aromas, those exquisite and elusive charms which characterize the poetry of Shelley or Keats, or those deeper, more complex, more elevated sympathies and passions which distinguish the great ones of all time.

The popular effectiveness of Macaulay therefore, is neither to be found in his poetry nor in the depth or range of his

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thought, but rather in those rhetorical arts which he carried to so high a perfection, fed and nourished as they were by a memory the most capacious and accurate perhaps, as he himself said of Sir James Macintosh, that was ever given to mortal. Considering the serious nature of the subjects with which he deals, and his serious manner of dealing with them—a manner by the way which does not allow of raillery or the more delicate forms of humour, in all of which he is naturally deficient,—there is not a weapon in the whole armoury of rhetoric which he has not employed with a skill which has rarely been equalled, and so far as I know never been surpassed. Indeed in turning to his pages again as I write, and judging him from a relative and not an absolute standard of perfection, I feel a sense of reproach in the face of such brilliant and various excellence, in having offered him even the show of detraction. Clearness, rapidity, polished epigram, antithesis, metaphor, precedent and analogy drawn from literature, history, and fairy-tale; climax and anti-climax, the repetition of clauses, the cumulation of effects, abstract qualities turned into concrete instances, concrete instances compressed again into abstractions, are all in turn brought into play as occasion requires with the greatest felicity and ease, keeping the mind in perpetual exhilaration; while to give heat and passion to it all, he has recourse to those arts of the melodramatist and orator which are most effective with the less cultured minds—the avoidance of all delicate *nuances*, and the heightening by means of gorgeous colouring, of the lights and shades of his picture, of virtue and vice, of greatness and meanness, happiness and misery, glory and shame.

And yet to deal strictly with him one is obliged to confess that in the highest regions of style, neither his rhetoric, his historic pageantry, nor his literary allusions have availed him anything. For although he has great rapidity, terseness, and vigour, and moves from sentence to sentence with lightness and ease, and although between his longer paragraphs the transitions are effected with spontaneity, simplicity, and grace,

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still no single sentence exhibits any richness or pictorial complexity, any distinctive aroma or organic vitality, but each like the individual soldier in a corps whose general movements and evolutions are easy and graceful, has a certain artificial and mechanical stiffness about it, and when made to step out from the ranks for inspection, gives out on tapping, not a soft and mellow but a hard metallic ring. With no true poetic fire to smelt the treasures which his over-freighted memory brings him, he cannot work them into the fibre of his sentences as he goes along; he cannot, like Turner, by the dashing and intermixing of a hundred shades get a complex pictorial unit in every square inch of canvas, nor like Shakspeare a single complex image in every line, out of the glancing facets and crosslights of words; but gets his effects rather by accumulation and addition than by transmutation, by drawing his treasures out in single file and in successive sentences or clauses like beads on a string, rather than by distillation and compression. Not that his sentences are slovenly or involved, on the contrary they are clipped and trimmed like Dutch Yew-trees, and fitted to the figure like the uniforms of the Guards; are as balanced and easy in their antithetic swing as the movement of a pendulum, and as fresh and pellucid as a running stream. But they have no organic life of their own, if you cut them they will not bleed, but each hanging on by the skirts of its neighbour for support, gets all its virtue from the whole paragraph of which it forms a part; all its effectiveness from the rapidity, brilliancy, and sparkle of the whole. His style in a word, to borrow a term from the physicists, has a dynamical rather than a statical excellence, an excellence of movement rather than of separate and particular beauty. How different from Shakspeare, Carlyle, Emerson, and those other great masters of expression whom one should always keep near one as standards and ideals. These great writers are characterized by the richness and vitality of their *separate* sentences; and this they get by bringing the radiance of the *whole* mind with all its

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higher sympathies and senses fused and at a white heat, full and complete on each point as it were, as one brings the whole eye in its complex organic integrity on each object, in order to unite its different parts into one single definite image. But Macaulay, wanting in those higher inner senses and sensibilities which he affected to despise, has no wholeness of eye or mind to bring to his object, but has to build up his pictures by a catalogue of particulars, like the features of a man seen through a hole in a cardboard, rather than by flashes; by accumulation and addition rather than by a single impression. So that if in the end he does succeed in convincing us of the truth of his characterizations, it is rather, as in a question of disputed identity, by an accumulation of unrelated particulars, a scar on the brow, a mole on the cheek, the loss of a tooth or finger, than as in a living body by the coherence and connexion of all the parts as members of one organic whole.

And at what a sacrifice has all his brilliancy been attained. To get the epigrams, the antitheses, the precedents, the parallels, the light and shade necessary to give 'go' and interest to the narrative and to carry the reader along with him, his materials have all to be torn and wrenched from the soil in which they naturally and spontaneously grow:—historical precedents from the circumstances of the time in which they arose, special qualities from the whole character, the whole character from the general ends for which it works, single motives from the complex web in which they lie, crude sentiment from the subtlety of shading necessary to give it truth,—and all for what? To establish some new or striking estimate of Charles, of Bacon, of Cromwell, of Hastings, of Temple, or of Clive. And when all is done and the facts and arguments so maimed have been teazed and disentangled from their complexities, have been trimmed and cut to pattern, marshalled in logical file and adorned with cut flowers of rhetoric of every variety and hue, and are then set spinning across the landscape before us like a railway train; the whole,

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while communicating to the onlooker a wonderful sense of exhilaration and delight, yet having no root in the soil over which it moves, leaves no abiding trace in the memory. Since those early days I must at one time or another have read these Essays of Macaulay half a dozen times or more, but beyond their general drift, the details though always read with equal freshness as at first, pass over the mind like a dream, and are forgotten.

And yet in my then depression I was deeply indebted to Macaulay for rousing me, even if for moments only, out of the torpor into which I had fallen, by his praise of literature and culture, by the trumpet-peals of his rhetoric, by the clash of arms and gleams of steel, and by the blows which he made rattle like hail on the heads of the ungodly; as for example in his essay on Milton, where characterizing the reign of Charles II. he begins, 'Then came those days never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave.' Splendid! I said to myself, and its high rhetorical indignation made the blood thrill along my veins in sympathetic response. Then there was the eloquence of the superficial but highly coloured antithesis in his description of the Puritans, 'If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away.'—and so on, all of which I thought very fine. But he did more for me. For in the teeth of my broken ideals and at a time when all greatness of soul seemed to me a figment of the imagination which the Spencerian philosophy

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had for ever dispelled, and when all distinctions of character and intellect, depending as they did on the activity of brain-cells which in themselves could have no gradation in ranking or degree, seemed to me an illusion, these highly charged portraits of Macaulay, rousing me for the moment to the old belief in greatness, came like trumpet peals; and all the more so by reason of that contrast of light and shade which like the vices of the chivalrous and fascinating highwayman, served rather to set off their splendour than to dim it, to intensify and inflame the imagination, rather than to cool it. The passages of this kind on which I most loved to dwell in my habitual torpor of spirit, were such for example as where he says of Strafford, 'But Wentworth,—who ever names him without thinking of those harsh dark features, ennobled by their expression into more than the majesty of an antique Jupiter; of that brow, that eye, that cheek, that lip, wherein, as in a chronicle, are written the events of many stormy and disastrous years, high enterprise accomplished, frightful dangers braved, power unsparingly exercised, suffering unshrinkingly borne; of that fixed look, so full of severity, of mournful anxiety, of deep thought, of dauntless resolution, which seems at once to forebode and to defy a terrible fate, as it lowers on us from the living canvas of Vandyke? Even at this day the haughty Earl overawes posterity as he overawed his contemporaries, and excites the same interest when arraigned before the tribunal of history, which he excited at the bar of the House of Lords.' Or of Swift, 'In the front of the opposite ranks appeared a darker and fiercer spirit, the apostate politician, the ribald priest, the perjured lover, a heart burning with hatred against the whole human race, a mind richly stored with images from the dunghill and the lazar-house.' And again his really beautiful panegyric on the intellect of Bacon, 'With great minuteness of observation, he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being.' 'His understanding resembled the tent

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which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it; and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it; and the armies of powerful Sultans might repose beneath its shade.' But even more than all, his quotation of Ben Jonson's eulogy on Bacon, 'My conceit of his person was never increased towards him by his place or honours; but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want.'

From all of which it would seem that the depression from which I was suffering was not so profound as at the time I imagined it to be, that it rather overhung the other activities of the mind like a cloud than dyed and interpenetrated them with its own gloom, so that no sooner was the weight of the philosophical doubt which held them down, for a moment removed, than they sprang up under the influence of youth and hope with all the old enthusiasm and delight. So true, indeed, is it that however much circumstances may in the long run be said to shape and mould our minds, still, at any given *point* of time, the dominant mood selects like a magnet from the passing world only what is the counterpart to itself, letting all the rest pass by unheeded; and so, in a word and in strict truth may be said to *make* its own world as a bird builds its own nest.

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CHAPTER II.

A FALSE START.

I HAVE dwelt at greater length on the characteristics of Macaulay's style and manner than I should have done had it not been that like a broadly-marked foot-rule they serve as an easy standard of comparison by which to measure the excellences and defects of other men. The first to whom I applied this standard of comparison was De Quincey who was the next of the Essayists that chanced to fall in my way and was almost the exact antithesis to Macaulay in style, matter and treatment. His mind had a much wider range, was richer in its contents, and dwelt habitually in a higher region of thought and contemplation. His works in consequence had a much greater interest for me, they carried a much more precious cargo, and left behind them a richer deposit of thought. Instead of dealing mainly with History, Criticism, and Politics, they ranged over almost every subject of human interest—Philosophy, Poetry, Metaphysics, Religion, Political Economy, Criticism, and Style. His history of the Cæsars, his theory of the Greek Drama, his account of the Pagan Oracles, of the Essenes, of the Roman Meals, his new estimate of Herodotus, his dissertations on Style, and on the difference between what he calls the literature of *knowledge* and the literature of *power*, the charming literary illustrations of his Political Economy, his peculiar humour as seen in his 'Murder as a Fine Art,' which reminds you now of Swift, now of Charles Lamb, and now of Jean Paul; his critical estimates of Pope, Wordsworth,

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Coleridge, and other of his literary contemporaries; and the out-of-the-way anecdotes and erudition with which he adorns it all, were for a month or two a perpetual feast to me; and to this day I know of no body of literary work at once more interesting and instructive, more rich in suggestion or more stimulating to the young aspiring mind. And with this greater richness and variety, it was interesting to note the corresponding characteristics of his style and manner of treatment. Macaulay, whose main end it is to convince you on some one more or less narrow and limited issue, seizes on what he conceives to be the central truth of his subject at the outset, and proceeds to cut his way out to the circumference by as straight a course and with as much rapidity as the obstacles in his path will permit. De Quincey on the other hand, equally desirous of exhibiting to the reader his treasures of curious and out-of-the-way learning as of convincing him of his main contention, prefers to begin leisurely at the circumference, and drawing a cordon of preliminary hypothesis around it, to move inward as in a siege, tightening the line as he advances, until he closes at last full on the truth in the centre. And hence it is that while Macaulay in his haste has to snatch as it were his flowers of rhetoric from their stems in passing, and is obliged to leave behind him in the soil the richness and beauty of the whole plant, De Quincey on the other hand, by means of the large circuit he has to occupy before reaching the centre, is enabled to transplant entire from the bye fields of learning, great masses of curious and interesting knowledge, all clustered and disposed in circlets of easy and graceful digression around the central truth. And accordingly instead of the rapid movement of Macaulay, dazzling your eye by his bright metallic gleam, and keeping up your interest to the end by the very wind and sweep of his motion, as well as by the variety and colour of the paper flowers of rhetoric which storm in on you in showers as you are whirled along, De Quincey moves slowly and leisurely to his end in sentences of high-swelling cadence and richly involuted phrase, turning now

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to this side, now to that, in endlessly interesting digression, and yet amid it all picking his steps with a pedantic fastidiousness, a kind of old-fashioned gentility and concern for the skirts of his robes, which is quite spinster-like in its solicitude. And yet in spite of his encyclopædic knowledge, his keen powers of analysis, his metaphysical subtlety and precision, this Dryasdust and Encyclopædist of genius, has like Macaulay neither depth nor penetration enough to fuse his separate essays into unity, neither co-ordinating power nor originality enough to carry them up to a single higher principle; but on the contrary leaves them standing around the field in separate tents, each infolded in its own peculiar completeness, but without relation to the deeper problems of the world as a whole. Even his style, when compared with that of the great masters of expression, is in its lower levels at least, so loaded with many-syllabled epithets and adjectives, runs into such verbosity, circumstantiality, and affectation of precision, as to become positively heavy; while in its more ambitious flights, in the opium dreams for example, it gets its *bravura* effects by piling mountain on mountain and turret on turret of grandiloquent imagery, pathetic or sublime, but hazy and indistinct in outline as cloud phantasmagory, and wanting in real coherence and complexity of internal structure. It has not, in a word, that high pictorial intensity which scorches words, as by flame of fire, into images burning and unforgettable. Him, too, therefore like Macaulay I found unable to forward me on my own special journey, and after enjoying for a season the rich spoil with which he had supplied me, I turned to that other of the great Essayists of the first quarter of the century—a man in many respects so different from them both—the much-abused but admirable Hazlitt.

To begin with, Hazlitt has neither the wealth of erudition of Macaulay, nor the range of intellectual interest of De Quincey. His philosophy is concerned almost entirely with the nature of men as he saw them around him, and not with German metaphysics and the history of Speculation; his politics, with

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the actual condition of peoples in his own time, and not with their historical evolution; his literature, with the broad highway open to all, and what is of wide human import, and not with its out-of-the-way nooks and corners or subtleties of erudition and scholarship. But to make amends for this limitation in the extent of his knowledge, he has greater penetration than either, deeper insight into the world of men and things than De Quincey with all his Metaphysics, finer literary delicacy and sensitiveness than Macaulay with all his superabundant memory and power of quotation. To take for example the main doctrine that lies at the bottom of all his critical philosophy, namely that the finest insight, whether in matters of ordinary judgment or in works of genius, is derived from intuition and feeling rather than from trains of conscious logic, and that in consequence, men's higher sensibilities and sympathies are real inner senses, real intellectual faculties, the range, delicacy, and strength of which are the true measure of intellectual power. This doctrine in itself, I say, is worth whole volumes of ordinary metaphysics, and gave Hazlitt this great advantage as a critic, that it put him at the outset at the right angle and focus for judging of poetry and works of art, inasmuch as these springing as they do from the depths of feeling and of passion can only be rightly approached and interpreted through the same medium, and not through any estimates of the mere mechanical understanding. And it was precisely this justness of view which when united with his fine natural delicacy and sensibility, gave him that levelness of critical judgment, that fine palate for differences in literary flavours, that keen sense of propriety in all that concerns sentiment, dialogue, and the fluctuation of passion, which have made his lectures on poetry and on the characters in Shakspeare's plays, the finest body of poetic and dramatic criticism in my opinion that as yet exists in our language.

Now with the limitation of Hazlitt's intellectual interests to things as they are, rather than to their history; to their present

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condition, rather than to their evolution in the past; to what is complete in itself and can be turned round and surveyed on all sides like a wheel, rather than to what like a snowball grows under your hand and changes from moment to moment; to the statical in a word rather than the dynamical aspect of things; with this limitation, I say, it is interesting to observe a similar limitation in the subject, method, and style. He takes for examples such separate themes and studies of life as 'on living to oneself,' 'on people with one idea,' 'on paradox and commonplace,' 'on vulgarity and affectation,' 'on patronage and puffing,' 'on thought and action,' and the like, or such artistic subjects as 'on genius and commonsense,' 'on the picturesque and the ideal,' on 'familiarity of style,' and so on; and turning each in its completeness round its own axle like a many-sided wheel, proceeds to note and comment on every part and angle of its circumference as it comes under his eye, in a number of shrewd observations, of acute but isolated splinters of reflection, rather than in a coherent web of everywhere connected thought. And corresponding to this, his style has little or no movement in it, has neither the rapidity and animation of Macaulay, nor the undulating swell of De Quincey, but breaks itself into single scintillations and points of light, often of much sparkle or brilliancy, rather than diffusing itself in a single continuous ray.

But in spite of his insight into those ideal regions of the mind where art and poetry dwell, as well as into the lower haunts of vulgarity, vanity, and pride; in spite of the ease and sureness with which he refers all the productions of genius and art to their correct categories in the human mind; and in spite, too, of the delicacy of his literary sensibilities; he had neither the capaciousness to gather up his refractory materials into unity, the pictorial intensity to make them live of themselves, nor the elevation of feeling necessary to burn them indelibly into the heart. So that his images and metaphors, often brilliant, served rather to point out his meaning into greater precision, than to lend to it any distinction, colour, or flavour of its own.

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And hence while enjoying to the full his shrewd observation and felicity of phrase, he neither stimulated me by rhetorical appeal like Macaulay, nor led me through wayward and delightful pastures like De Quincey, nor yet did he minister directly to those trains of melancholy reflection in which in my depression I habitually lived—on the mystery of life, the flight of time, the pathos of mortal things, the tragedy of human affection and of love. But indirectly he did much more for me. He introduced me in his quotations from the Elizabethan Dramatists to the beauties of Shakspeare, to whom as yet I had not thought of turning, feeling as I did that as a poet engaged in representing the characters of men, he would not be likely to forward me much in solving the problem of the World. But in these quotations I found what more than gave echo to my mood, and body to my particular griefs, soothing them like a lullaby or accompanying them like a requiem. Among these my favourite in the grand style was that splendid panegyric in Beaumont and Fletcher, where Cæsar in sublime disdain of the pretensions of even the Egyptian pyramids to be mausoleum fit for the great soul of Pompey, is made to say :—

> 'No, brood of Nilus!
> Nothing can cover his high fame but heaven;
> No pyramids set off his memories
> But the eternal substance of his greatness,
> To which I leave him.'

Or again, those beautiful lines in Cymbeline where Aviragus bringing in the body of Imogen whom he supposes to be dead, proceeds in tones sweet and tender as the flowers with which he would bestrew her grave :—

> 'With fairest flowers
> Whilst Summer lasts, and I live here Fidèle,
> I'll sweeten thy sad grave; thou shalt not lack
> The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor
> The azured harebell, like thy veins; no, nor
> The leaf of Eglantine, which not to slander
> Out-sweetened not thy breath.'

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As instance again of that high pictorial power which cannot as I have said be got by any addition or accumulation of detail however accurate or prolonged, but only by the mind at white-heat fusing its materials as by lightning, there was that magnificent description of the storm at sea in Othello, where the spectator in glowing hyperbole exclaims,

> 'Do but stand upon the foaming shore
> The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds
> The wind-shak'd surge with high and monstrous mane
> Seems to cast water on the burning bear
> And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole,
> I never did like molestation view
> On the enchafed flood.'

Or again the exquisite pathos of the scene that followed close upon it, where Othello in landing after the storm, finds Desdemona awaiting him, and where in his ecstasy of joy there comes over him as he embraces her, that fateful sense of foreboding which subdues his mind to awe and solemnity, as if in this brief life such pure and absolute peace could never again be vouchsafed him,

> 'If it were now to die
> T'were now to be most happy; for I fear
> My soul hath her content so absolute
> That not another comfort like to this
> Succeeds in unknown fate.'

where the very sound and fall of the words have in them a kind of foretaste and far-off echo of doom.

But more than all, I loved to dwell on the death-scenes of the leading characters in his great tragedies; whether of the old, broken with ingratitude or care, or of those in the morning of life, so noble, so perplexed, so misunderstood, where what I may call the note of world-pathos everywhere arises like a purified soul out of the body of their particular sorrows—a form of pathos I may add, which from that time disappeared almost entirely from our literature, until its note was again heard in our own day in the writings of Ruskin and Carlyle. Listen to it

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in Lear, where the good Kent deprecates all further attempts to revive his weary heart-broken master,

> 'Vex not his ghost, O let him pass: he hates him much
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer.'

Or in the dying words of Hotspur to young Prince Harry, who has killed him in battle and now bends over his prostrate body to catch his last expiring accents,

> 'O Harry thou hast robbed me of my youth
> I better brook the loss of brittle life
> Than those proud titles thou hast won of me
> They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh.
> But thoughts the slave of life, and life time's fool,
> And time that takes survey of all the world
> Must have a stop.—O! I could prophesy
> But that the earthy and cold hand of death
> Lies on my tongue. No, Percy, thou art dust
> And food for ——
>
> (The Prince)
> For worms, brave Percy, fare thee well, great heart,' etc.

Or the parting words of Timon to the Athenian Senators who have come out to his cave to persuade him to return to Athens,

> 'Come not to me again, but say to Athens
> Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
> Upon the beachèd verge of the salt flood
> Who once a day with his embossed froth
> The turbulent surge shall cover; thither come
> And let my grave-stone be your oracle.'

Or the moving soliloquy of Alcibiades when he reads the copy of Timon's epitaph which has been brought to him,

> 'These well express in thee thy latter spirits
> Though thou abhorrd'st in us our human griefs
> Scornd'st our brains flow and those our droplets which
> From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceits
> Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye
> On thy low grave, on faults forgiven.'

Or more pathetic than all, the dying words of Hamlet to

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Horatio when after snatching the poisoned cup from him, there comes over his mind in the mid'st of the carnival of blood that surrounds him, the wounds his good name must sustain, with his cause unknown, himself misunderstood, and men's minds unsatisfied:—

> 'O good Horatio what a wounded name,
> Things standing thus unknown shall live behind me
> If ever thou did'st hold me in thy heart
> Absent thee from felicity awhile
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
> To tell my story.'

These and the like extracts from Shakspeare first taught me what great writing really was,—the combination of high pictorial concentration and complexity in the phrasing, with such subtlety of movement and fall in the rhythm of the sentences as shall express shades and combinations of thought and feeling,—of tenderness, pathos, indignation, pride, and the like—beyond the reach of the mere words themselves;—and from that hour I have never been quite satisfied with any other. But time was speeding on, and while I could have still gone on reading this miscellaneous writing with delight, I now began to feel that it was not advancing me in the main object of my quest,—the solution of the Problem of the World. The fact was these Essayists—Macaulay, De Quincey, Hazlitt and the rest—belonged to that older school of writers beginning with Addison and Steele, who confined themselves to isolated points of knowledge, whether of human life or manners, of literature or history, but without connecting their special opinions with their views of the world as a whole, religious or philosophical. For whether they held to the old creed with more or less tenacity like Macaulay and De Quincey, or frankly denied it like Hazlitt, they never dreamt of carrying their speculations on life or books up to those higher fountains of thought to be vivified and interpenetrated thence by their life-giving or thought-compelling streams. And it was not until the influx of German

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thought into England with Coleridge and Carlyle, that a new era began which has since changed the entire face of English Literature. But it was some time yet before I made practical acquaintance with these great writers, and in the meantime, dropping the Essayists with as much haste as I had taken them up, by a sudden wheel of caprice I turned to the Historians.

I began, I remember with Herodotus, the sweetly-moving simple minded Herodotus, and passing on from him to the cold but sagacious Thucydides, went swiftly along through Livy, Suetonius, Tacitus and the other historians of ancient times, till I came to the monumental Gibbon with his pompous tread, and descending with him in his stately and triumphant march across the vale of the Dark Ages, emerged again on the hither-side into the full light of Modern Civilization, to be conducted thence by the careful and judicious Hallam, the philosophical Hume, the fair-minded Robertson, the brilliant Macaulay and the rest, down to our own time. Now in all these without exception, the narrative portions of their histories are interspersed with philosophical and other reflections which serve as connecting link to the order and sequence of events. But instead of attaching supreme importance to the general material and social conditions of their respective times—whether intellectual, moral, geographical, or political,—and making the greatness of Emperors and Kings depend on the clearness with which they saw, and the readiness with which they fell in line with this general march and trend of things, they on the contrary have everywhere given the first place to the capricious wills of these Emperors and Kings, and have either entirely cut them off from, or but intermittently connected them with, those material and social conditions in the evolution of which alone is any general law of progress to be seen. The consequence was that in the works of these men no such unity was discoverable in the movement of ages and nations as might have given me a clue to the general plan of the World; and except therefore for the delectation which their works gave to a mind at once

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hungering for knowledge and intent on understanding the nature of things, they left me in much the same position as they found me; and I turned not without doubt, but still with a glimmering of hope, to some of the more recent of our Poets and Novelists—to Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë and others of less title to fame.

I had already dipped into these writers here and there at odd moments, and had gathered enough from their contents to convince me that they also like myself had suffered from the manifold spiritual burdens and perplexities of the time; and I now hoped that a more careful study of their works, by exhibiting the process by which they had emerged from their difficulties, would help me in some measure to the solution of my own. But to my disappointment I found that instead of making these difficulties the fore-court or vestibule by which, as I had hoped, I was to enter into their solution, they were used rather as themes on which to ring the changes of poetic regret, or as foils for the loves or aversions of the maidens and heroes of their story. And admirable as is their knowledge of human nature within the limits they have marked out for themselves, their flight nevertheless stops short on the confines of that higher region of the mind which we may call the region of the Ideal. They get their acceptance from their insight into the workings of the ordinary passions and interests of our nature, and like meteors which can give no light in the upper regions of the ether but only when they strike the denser medium of our atmosphere, they continue to revolve within that narrower circle of relations of which love, jealousy, revenge, or some other tangible human feeling is the centre, rather than illuminating like suns those laws of the spiritual and ideal nature of man, which alone when contemplated in all their bearings can throw light in the Problem of the World.

All alike therefore, Essayists and Historians, Poets and Novelists, in whose various felicities of style or of thought I had found so much temporary solace and delight, but from

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whom, feeling that they were not really advancing me on my journey, I never rose without pain; all had to be dropped in turn, and in despair I reluctantly turned to the great World-Thinkers of the Past, and opened, I remember, with Plato.

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CHAPTER III.

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY.

I WAS charmed with Plato, and with every aspect of him; charmed with his massive, imposing, and cathedral-like architecture of the Universe; with his delicacy and lightness of touch, his perfection of culture, and his exquisite refinement and sensibility; and in later years dwelt on his works lovingly and long. But as at the time of which I am writing he had no answer to give to the particular perplexities from which I was suffering, no balm for my wounded spirit, nor power of restoring to me my lost ideal, I was obliged to quickly pass him by; and ran in rapid succession through the various systems of the Aristotelians, the Stoics, the Sceptics, the Epicureans, and the Neo-Platonists; concentrating in particular on the later writers, Cicero, Lucretius, Seneca, Philo, Plutarch and Marcus Aurelius; and skipping altogether not only the early Church Fathers—Tertullian, Athanasius, Origen, and Augustine—but the great Catholic Theologians—Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and the rest—with the feeling mainly that however profound, subtle, and coherent they might be (and some of them like Augustine and Aquinas as I afterwards found, belong to the imperial race of Thinkers), their systems although having all the harmony and elaborateness of orchestral symphonies, could after all be but expansions of the Gospel 'Scheme of Salvation' which from temper, training,

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and the painful associations of my boyhood, I had long since rejected. Having passed thus lightly over the entire Middle Ages, I plunged again with much ardour into the modern Philosophies beginning with Descartes, under the impression that as they were nearer to me in point of time than the Ancients, they were more likely to give me what I wanted. Accordingly having gone in succession through Malebranche, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Berkeley, Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, and not found an answer to my difficulties, I turned to the English and Scotch Schools, to Dugald Stewart, Reid, Brown, etc., and did not rest until I had come down to our own time, finishing with the works of Hamilton, Mansell, and Mill. Unfortunately the three Thinkers who would have been of use to me, and who as we shall see farther on influenced my course of thought in later years in not a few important particulars, namely Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Comte, were entirely passed over by me, either from misapprehension, misunderstanding, or prejudice; Hegel, because of some unfavourable impression I had received of him in earlier days, on taking up by chance a copy of Hutchinson Stirling's book on the 'Secret of Hegel'; Schopenhauer, because of his reputation for pessimism from which in my then humour I shrank with aversion; and Comte, because of the unfavourable impression I had received of him from Spencer's essay on the 'Classification of the Sciences,' the impression, namely, that his whole system rested on a basis of false and exploded scientific conceptions with which it would be a waste of time to concern myself. With the exception then of these three whom I did not read, one and all of the great Philosophers of the Ancient and Modern World whom I have mentioned, were unceremoniously put aside by me as unable to help me out of the difficulties which had been flung into Philosophy, not to speak of Theology, by the 'Origin of Species,' and by the great generalizations which Spencer had founded on the most recent results of Physical Science.

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Now, that I was not capricious or frivolous in disposing thus lightly and with such easy *nonchalance*, of thinkers who in their age and time were among the master spirits of the world, but that on the contrary I proceeded on definite and what appeared to me substantial grounds, a few illustrations will make manifest. Among the Ancient Philosophers, for example, I found that Plato regarded the fixed stars not as incandescent masses of Matter as we now know them to be, but as real gods, pure and immortal natures quiring like angels their everlasting harmonies around the throne of the Eternal Beauty, which they contemplated with perennial delight. I found too that he regarded even the planets, including the sun and moon, as gods, though gods of more earthy, impure, and mixed natures than the fixed stars; and sincerely believed their function to be that of time-keepers for the rest of the Universe, as well as the instruments of Fate for men; controlling as they did the destinies, and marking out by their revolutions and conjunctions, the years and the hours for mortal souls. Nor were his Chemistry and Physics any more satisfactory. Fire, Air, Earth, and Water, he conceived as made up of little triangles; the difference in the nature and properties of these elements being due, he thought, to the way in which the little triangles were combined into larger figures; Fire with its sharp, penetrating, and stinging quality, because they were built up into the form of sharp-pointed pyramids; Earth with its dullness, grossness, and density, because they were compacted into solid cubes, and so on. His Physiology and Psychology, too, were little better. The Soul, or at least the mortal part of it, or what we should call the 'vital principle,' was conceived by him as having extension, and as pervading the body like an ether, as a finer form of Matter, in short; the sentiments and passions having their seats in separate parts or organs of the body; courage in the breast, and the darker and grosser passions in the liver, spleen, and other abdominal viscera; while he represented disease as resulting either from the cold

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freezing the material fluids, the fluids soaking and swelling the solids, or the heat pricking the various internal organs with its little needle-pointed triangles, and inflaming them, and so on. Aristotle, again, although making a great advance in Physiology and Zoology, was in his astronomical conceptions almost as crude as Plato. Like him, he believed the Earth to be the centre of the Universe, and to be fixed and rooted in eternal rest; while all motion whether on the earth or in the heavens, was derived from a vast reservoir of ether, which he figured as surrounding all things and distributing motion to them as required; much as a mill-dam supplies the water which gives motion to the mill-wheel. What then could one do with philosophies like these? What but reject them, in spite of the profound observations they contained on human life, on morals, on society, on politics, on poetry, on art, observations as true to-day as when they were written, and good, many of them, for all time. For it cannot be overlooked that the answers which we shall give to the great and ever-pressing problems of the nature and destiny of man and of his place in the Universe, of the nature of God and of the human soul, of immortality, and so on, must if not absolutely depend on, still be greatly modified by, the answers we give to precisely these astronomical, physical, chemical, physiological, and psychological problems. Does it make no difference, for example, to what we are prepared to believe as to the destiny of man and his place in the Universe, whether on the one hand we regard our earth as the centre of the Universe, and man as the centre of the earth, for whom all things on it exist; or whether on the other hand we regard the earth as but an insignificant planet among billions of mighty constellations, and man as but one species of animal among many others, all alike engaged in the struggle for existence, and existing not for the sake of man but for themselves alone? Again does it make no difference as to what we shall believe on the disputed question of the immortality of the soul, whether with Plato we

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regard each soul as an immortal existence separately fashioned by the gods and let down from heaven for a season to be imprisoned in a mortal body, from which when released by death it returns to its home again among the stars; or whether with Spencer we believe it to be but a transient product of the molecular motion of the brain, in the same way as heat is the transient product of the molecular motion in a bar of iron, each alike being active when the molecular motion is intense, but absent or dead when the molecular motion slackens or ceases to be? And when we remember that down to the advent of Modern Science the entire fabric both of Philosophy and Theology reposed on these doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, variously modified in detail indeed, and supplemented in the case of Theology by the Mosaic Cosmogony, what could one do but reject them? To reject Christianity because the Mosaic Cosmogony ran counter to Modern Science, and then to fall down before Plato and Aristotle, mere mundane philosophers whose systems were in their scientific aspect equally primitive and crude, would indeed have been an incongruity and absurdity. As well go back to the Ptolemaic Astronomy at once.

My reasons for rejecting the Modern School of Metaphysicians, although different in kind were quite as definite in character, but to make these clear some preliminary observations are necessary. In a general way we may say that at the period immediately following the Revival of Learning and before the full tide of Modern Thought had fairly set in, two systems of Thought or Doctrine stood confronting one another, in each of which, though in different ways, the ideals of the heart might still find a home. The one was the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages, the other was the great system of Platonic Philosophy. The former which had been slowly rising through the ages like some vast cathedral over the simple shrine of Jesus, was a composite structure of great complexity, and had taxed the genius, the speculation, and the organizing power of

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fifteen centuries to bring it to its present state of elaborate and harmonious completeness. It had for foundation and outer abutments the Mosaic Cosmogony, with the six days Creation, the Fall of Man, Original Sin, and the like; for dome, the Godhead bequeathed as a legacy from Judaism, but shaped by the cunning hand of Platonism into a Trinity of Persons, each with His appropriate office and function, and yet all constituting but One God; and for internal organization and worship, an elaborate and complex ritual and hierarchy modelled on the Roman Imperial System, informed with the spirit of Roman Law, and wrought into a harmonious whole by principles drawn from the Philosophy of the Stoics and Aristotle. When the Reformation came, all this elaborate internal organization, with its bishops and priests, its altars, its masses and its penances, its saints and images, its fasts and pilgrimages, together with the grossness by which of late their original purity had become defiled, was swept away as by an inundation; but there still remained untouched the Mosaic foundation, the Platonic dome, and the simple shrine around which men wept and loved and prayed; while through the wide-open portals the simple and devout of all ages and conditions could walk in and out, and still find satisfaction somewhere along its echoing aisles for every ideal and longing of the heart, could still find there a God, a Heaven, a hope of Salvation, and an Immortality.

For the cultured, again, there stood side by side with the Church, and in all its original splendour, the colossal figure of Plato, newly resurrected by the *Renaissance* from the earth in which it had been buried for a thousand years, and now again set on its pedestal for the admiration and despair of mankind. There he stood in his pure and exquisite symmetry and completeness, in his severe and silent majesty and beauty, overlooking the night of the Middle Ages which he had left behind him, like those Egyptian *colossi* that still overlook the desert; and making music in this sunrise of the world like the fabled statue of Memnon. And around him clustered the cultured,

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the erudite, the sceptical, the disillusioned, all those who could find no home in the Church and who sought in the harmony, proportion, and completeness of his great scheme of the World, a place for their starved ideals—for their sense of beauty, of the high destinies of the soul, and of immortality.

But suddenly and without a note of warning there fell on the world like a succession of bombs, a series of scientific discoveries which burst both on the Church and on ancient Philosophy with damaging, and in the case of Platonism with immediately disastrous effect. The first of these discoveries was the Copernican Astronomy, which striking the colossal system of Plato in its most vital part, namely its Cosmogony, brought it in a confused heap to the earth, where to this hour, like the giant figure of Ramases outside the ruins of Thebes, it lies prostrate, and from which, except in its spirit and soul which are immortal, it can never rise. For in this system it was the planets and fixed stars, it will be remembered, that were the immortal gods; it was these that fashioned the immortal souls of men and placed them in their immortal bodies; it was by these that the ideals of men were implanted in their souls; and it was to these that the soul returned when it had left the body, to enjoy with them a blissful immortality. And with the fall of Platonism fell once and for all Ancient Philosophy itself; and in its ruins were crushed as at a blow the ideals of all those whom the Church had expatriated, and who unless they could return again to her bosom were without a home, without a God, a soul, or an immortality. But the Church itself had been badly struck by the same shells that had brought to ruin Ancient Philosophy; and although the blow was not at once mortal (for the Christian 'Scheme of Salvation' could more easily survive the destruction of the Mosaic Cosmogony with which it was bound up, than could Plato's doctrine of the soul and immortality survive the Platonic Cosmogony), still in the long run and when the discoveries of Copernicus were followed up by those of Galileo,

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Kepler, and Newton, its ultimate downfall was but a matter of time. For by degrading Man from his proud position as the centre of the Universe and the cynosure of gods and angels, to the position of a poor bewildered spectator on its confines merely, who neither knew where he was nor whither he was going; with the world all turned upside down, and with neither an *above* for Heaven nor a *below* for Hell;—with all this, these discoveries by undermining the foundations of the Church and making gaps in her walls, had left her a standing mark for the missiles of her enemies. But the magnificent dome of the Godhead still rose clear and flawless in the morning sunlight, untouched by the falling shells; and within was still the little shrine of Jesus, around which the faithful could watch and pray as of yore. For although these without the Mosaic Creation and the Fall of Man which were their foundation, were but like decapitated heads severed from their now worthless trunks, or like flower and fruit which cut from their roots needs must wither; still, like those bones and relics of the saints and martyrs which kept the devotions of the simple as much alive and aglow as the saints themselves in the flesh could have done, these relics of Christianity served for many ages to stave off from the souls, and therefore from the ideals of men, putrefaction and death; and from them Modern Philosophy now orphaned of its ideals by the death of Ancient Thought, had to help itself at a pinch, as we shall now see, when in the alternations of its successive systems it fell periodically into Atheism, Pessimism, and Scepticism.

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CHAPTER IV.

SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

FROM the above imperfect sketch we should seem justified in concluding that if Philosophy and Religion are ever again to give life and soul to our ideals as they did in the Past, they must find for themselves some comprehensive Scheme of the World in which these ideals may find their appropriate setting, and on which they can be engrafted as easily and naturally as they once were on Platonism and Mediæval Catholicism, before the Copernican Astronomy had shattered the boughs on which they hung as the golden fruit. For it cannot be too often repeated that it is from our mode of regarding the World *as a whole* and our relation to it, that our ideals are in the long run determined, and at no time perhaps, has this truth required a more frequent restatement and re-enforcement than at the present. Many of our modern critics would have us believe that the influence of Carlyle, for example, was due to his power of personal characterization, or to the picturesqueness of his literary style; of Ruskin, to his beauty of language, or his high and severe æsthetic morality; of Emerson, to his elevation and serenity of mind, to his practical shrewdness, or to the stimulus which he gave to men to live in the Spirit; forgetting all the while that these men by their own express admission would not have taken off their coats, metaphorically speaking, to write either the 'French Revolution,'

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the 'Modern Painters,' or the 'Essays,' were it not that they found in these the best *media* for enforcing those great conceptions of the World as a whole and of man's relation to it, in which they habitually lived. Even a man like Cardinal Newman gets his importance in the eyes of many critics from his being 'a master of prose style' as they call it, (a matter about which it would seem he was quite indifferent) rather than from his intellectual penetration and subtlety, and from those fine constructive speculations by which he sought to connect the Catholic Church with that unseen world on which his heart and soul were ever fixed. It were as reasonable to imagine that his intellectual position was due to his violin-playing, an exercise in which, as in his manipulation of language, he is said to have attained to a high degree of proficiency. But this tendency to divorce literary criticism from all issues larger than that of mere word-mongering, is nowhere better seen perhaps, than in the case of the late Walter Pater, who wrote a book on Plato to show that his great system of Philosophy which illuminated the minds of men for twenty centuries, was after all a mere incident and circumstance in his activity, but that his really great and abiding excellence was his literary felicity and charm. Literary fiddlesticks! one is tempted to exclaim; for if we consider it, literary expression is not to be brought to perfection, like flowers in hothouses, by artificial cultivation merely, however assiduous or prolonged; on the contrary its higher ranges of excellence whether in prose or in verse, can no more be had except from those whose thoughts have their roots deep down in the subsoil of the world and of human life, or in some wide general aspect of these, than can the spreading foliage of an oak be got from a gardener's flower-pot. Where, for example, can we find pathos to compare with the World-pathos of writers like Shakspeare and Carlyle, who habitually saw men as ghosts mistaking themselves in their dreams for realities, fighting, cursing, hating, and loving, 'their little lives rounded with a sleep?'

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Where, again, can you find sublimity to compare with the World-sublimity of Milton, who seeing the Fall of Man and the Gospel Scheme of Salvation painted on the walls of Eternity, lived in them, and with awe-struck solemnity walked in the sight of them 'as ever in his great Task-master's eye?' What picturesqueness of expression can be compared with that of Shakspeare again, who with an eye for the world as wide and open as the morn, brings all its radiances, riches, and glancing beauties to a focus, as it were, on each and every point he is describing? Or what pictorial intensity with that of Dante, whose heart torn and on fire with the tragedy of the world, burnt its sorrows into his page with furrows as deep as those by which they had ploughed his own soul, and whom men pointed to as he walked along as the man who had been in Hell? If this be true, and if the merely outward qualities of literary expression get all their value and vitality from the deep wells of thought and feeling by which they are watered, how much more true must it be that the ideals by which men live and work, must flourish or wither according as they can or cannot be grafted on some large general scheme of the World and of Human Life. It was because Plato's doctrine of the nature and destiny of the soul was, as we have seen, the natural corollary and outcome of his general Cosmogony or Scheme of the World, that he claimed validity for those ideals of life which naturally grow out of this conception of the soul, and that these ideals continued to sway the lives and thoughts of men for a thousand years. It is because the Christian 'Scheme of Redemption' had its natural roots in a Cosmogony in which the Earth was the centre of the Universe, man the centre of the Earth, and the Devil the author of all evil and discord, that Christianity in its turn has ruled the beliefs of men, and given basis and support to their ideals for so many ages. Without such Cosmogony, indeed, the Gospel 'Scheme of Salvation' could not have arisen at all, much less grown and overspread the world; and without the Gospel Scheme, what

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would have become of the high ethical precepts of Jesus, which it was the mission of Christianity to propagate? Why this, that without a Church founded on this Scheme of Salvation as suitable soil in which to grow and propagate themselves, these attempts as being in themselves but the personal sentiments of a highly gifted nature, would long since have been washed away in the great Pagan stream.

If this be true, we have now to ask whether Modern Philosophy beginning with Bacon and Descartes, was likely to find for itself a Cosmogony or general Scheme of the World which should furnish as natural and harmonious a framework and setting for men's ideals, as was formerly found for them in Platonism and Mediæval Catholicism respectively. And to ask the question is already to have gone a long way towards answering it. For, to begin with, it is only within living memory that the separate sciences necessary for a complete Cosmogony have been so perfected, so marshalled and brought up into line, as it were, that from their harmonious combination any great scheme of the World which should either support men's ideals on the one hand, or bar them out on the other, has been possible at all. Scientific Astronomy with its Law of Gravitation has been with us, it is true, since the days of Newton; but then the orderly movements of the Universe which it disclosed, could be appealed to either to support our ideals or to negative them; to support them if looked at in one way, as pointing to a Providence which had made so exquisite a provision for the order of the Universe as a whole; to negative them if looked at in another, as demonstrating that the affairs of men are at the mercy of a purely mechanical and all-embracing Fate. As for the other sciences again, which like Chemistry, Philosophy, Biology, and Psychology, bear directly on the questions of the existence of a Soul, a Free-Will, and an Immortality, they had scarcely attained to the dignity of sciences until our own time; and so far as they go, the conclusions to which on their own plane they point, would

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as we have seen from Spencer, rule out from the purview of our hopes and dreams not only the existence of God, but of the Soul, of Free-Will, and of Immortality. It is evident, therefore, that Modern Philosophy since the time of Descartes, could not afford the same universal support for the ideals of men, that they had had in Platonism and Catholicism respectively. For Astronomy having been ruled out as affording no sure or definite support either way; and the other sciences which bear directly on the existence and reality of our ideals, not yet having come into existence, any support which these ideals could find, could have been but a thing of shreds and patches merely, made up of those parts of Catholicism and Ancient Philosophy which the Copernican and Newtonian Astronomy had left untouched, supplemented by such new 'finds' as had come from regions which both Ancient Philosophy and Catholicism had left unexplored. These latter might be summed up on the one hand as the deductions which were legitimately to be drawn from the operations of Nature on our own planet, and on the other as deductions which were to be drawn from the results of the analysis of the powers and faculties of the human mind. And accordingly, as we shall now see, it was on one or other of these that both the Modern Apologists and the Modern Philosophers pitched as the field of their operations; the Apologists taking as was natural, the more popular and easily apprehended subjects as their province; the philosophers, the more abstruse and difficult ones. Sometimes it was on the evidences of design in nature, that the Apologists and Natural Theologians pitched as the best supports of Christianity and of the ideals that Christianity carried with it; these evidences being mainly drawn from the exquisite adaptation of creatures to their environment, or from the ingenuities of mechanism in the structure of animals and plants, and the like. Sometimes it was on what was called the Providence of God in History, as seen in the rise and fall of Empires and States, in the history of Judaism, and in the

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conquest of the world by a handful of Galilean fishermen; sometimes again, it was on the guiding hand of Providence as exemplified in the lives and fortunes of individuals, the triumphs of the good, the confusion of the wicked, and so on; and sometimes on a general survey of the whole. The Philosophers on the other hand, not having at their command a sufficient body of scientific truth on which to construct a new and harmonious Cosmogony of their own, as Spencer has recently done, and having resigned the justification of the ways of God to Man, for the most part, into the hands of the Apologists and Natural Theologians, had nothing left them as their special and peculiar province, but the Human Mind itself. And accordingly, just as the older physiologists and physicians when they had given up all hope of explaining the phenomena of disease by the old hypothesis of demoniacal agency and the like, at last set to work on the human body itself, to see if by dissecting it they could not find out the real causes at work; so the Philosophers when they had given up all hope of any longer finding their ideals, as formerly, in the Church or Ancient Philosophy, set to work on the human mind itself, to see if by analysis and dissection of it they could not find them there; now settling on the faculty of Intelligence and the phenomena of knowledge, now on the Conscience, and now on the Heart. Hence they are known as the Modern Metaphysicians, inasmuch as most of them deal mainly with the human mind, and not like the Ancient Philosophers with the World as a Whole.

As for the Apologists, the compilers of the works on Natural Theology, and the long line of Theologians stretching from Butler and Paley to the Bampton and other University Lecturers of our own day, with these I gave myself at the time of which I am writing little or no concern. Coming to them, as I did, fresh from the speculations of Darwin and of Spencer, and from the most recent discoveries in science, I regarded their works as a series of exploded fallacies, and with my youthful contempt for Christianity as an old and decaying

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superstition, still strong upon me, I resented the idea of being asked to consider seriously at this time of day, what I regarded as the bad science, the forced interpretation, and the arbitrary conclusions of these so-called 'Evidences of Christianity.' For I was in deadly earnest in this business, and having lost my own ideals I was not to be put off with what I regarded as the clap-trap of the Theologians, any more than with the popular clap-trap of the pulpit, but insisted that all those with whom I should have any dealings in these matters should come to the facts as I imagined myself to have done, with minds as free and disengaged from all bias or prejudice whatever, as if they had been let down from another planet. And hence it was that I was repelled by what I imagined to be the professional bias, the sleek and well-paid advocacy of these high-placed divines, but especially by the tone of their Apologies when considering the dealings of God with man, which in my then revolutionary temper seemed to me like the tone of those who would whitewash the worst and vilest scoundrelisms of the great and powerful, until they looked like positive virtues! And so with a bias and prejudice, perhaps, as great as that which I denounced, I ruled them one and all from out the scope of my speculations, and turned to the Metaphysicians properly so called.

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CHAPTER V.

MODERN METAPHYSICS.

AMONG the other fragments of Platonism and Mediæval Catholicism that had been bequeathed by Modern Philosophy, was the belief in the existence of the Soul as an entity distinct from and independent of the body; and from this belief to the belief in its immortality as a spiritual and presumably therefore indestructible entity, was but a step. Hence it was that when the Metaphysicians of the Modern World settled on the human mind as the field of their operations, and sought by analysis to discover in it some more certain evidence of the existence of God, Immortality, and the Ideal, than that of mere traditional belief or surmise, their main concern was not so much to demonstrate the existence of Free Will and Immortality (for these as I have said were almost corollaries from its spiritual essence), but rather to demonstrate the existence of God—without which indeed, in those days at least, none of the high ideals of the mind could have any real root at all. They began their operations, as it chanced, by fastening on the Intellectual Faculty, the Faculty of Knowledge, as the field of their activity, and particularly on the problem of how it comes about that we can have any knowledge of a world existing outside of ourselves; and it was in the analysis of this process of knowledge, that the three first of these great Metaphysicians — Descartes, Geulinx, and Malebranche, —

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found their main proof for the existence of God. For inasmuch as the objects in the world around, as well as our own bodies, are characterized by the properties of extension, materiality, and divisibility, whereas our minds have neither extension, materiality, nor divisibility, it was argued that it was a natural impossibility that material and extended things should make an impression on an immaterial unextended thing like Mind, so as to produce in it what we call knowledge; while on the other hand it was considered equally impossible that our minds should so act on our bodies, as to move them or the objects around us. The two things were believed to be as absolutely incompatible as oil and water, and it was contended that it was as hopeless to get any knowledge or increase of knowledge by bringing them together, as it would be by bringing together a colour and a sound. But as it was admitted that knowledge did in point of fact actually pass to and fro between them and was increased in the passage, some bridge it was evident there must be. And if not a natural bridge, then it must be a supernatural one; and if so what could it be but God? This reasoning seemed absolutely valid to Descartes, who had already convinced himself on independent grounds that the existence of an all-powerful, all-perfect Being was as much involved in the consciousness of our own imperfections and limitations, as any other member of a pair of opposites is in the other, as black is in white, as good in bad, and the like; and had therefore the same certainty as our own existence. And he argued further that if the outer world does not really exist, either God who has put the belief of its existence into our minds is a liar, or our knowledge of it, owing to the impossibility of our minds getting across to it, must be a dream.

Geulinx and Malebranche took up practically the same position in regard to knowledge as Descartes, and maintained like him, the impossibility without the help of God, of our knowing anything beyond the fact of our own existence and

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His; owing to the impossibility of a material thing acting on an immaterial one like Mind; the only difference between them being that whereas Descartes figured the union as effected by God Himself standing in the breach, as it were, with one foot on the external world and the other on Mind, and so bridging over the gulf between them; Geulinx figured God as intervening, rather, after the manner of a watch-maker who occasionally interposes to set one watch to keep time with the other; while Malebranche, who imagined that even if material things could make an impression on the mind, these impressions must cancel and obliterate each other like posters placed on the top of each other on a hoarding, figured Mind and Matter as like two men tied back to back, who although they cannot catch sight of each other *directly*, can nevertheless manage to do so *sideways*, as it were, if they are reflected in the mirror of another mind which can equally reflect them both; and that mirror is God.

To these philosophers who had thus demonstrated the existence of God and the Ideal World to their own satisfaction, succeeded Spinoza, that rare and beautiful spirit, who during the progress of the controversy had become so fascinated with the problem of knowledge for its own sake, that in his endeavour to free it from the perpetual interposition of God deemed necessary to explain it, he unwillingly, like a man so intent on star-gazing that he falls into the water, fell into a species of Atheism; and so practically lost sight of the Ideal altogether! For to get rid of this perpetual miracle against which his common sense revolted, he figured Mind and Matter (although like his predecessors he regarded them as absolutely distinct and unbridgeable) as the two correlated sides or aspects of one and the same Thing, Cause, or Substance; which Substance, again as he called it, included not only them as its attributes, but innumerable other attributes or forms of existence as well, of which our minds can have no knowledge; much in the same way as there is a fourth dimension in Space with which the higher Mathematics deals, but of which in our present life, conditioned

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as it is by Space of three dimensions only, we can have no knowledge or experience. In this way, Spinoza by making Mind and Matter the two parallel and corresponding sides of one and the same Original Substance, found a solution for the difficulty of so uniting the material and the immaterial as to produce knowledge, without the necessity of a God to accomplish the feat. It was only when he came to the consideration of what was to be done with the particular aspects of Mind, such as reason, imagination, sense, emotion, sentiment, and passion, that in the course of his reflections he fell into a practical Atheism. For these he regarded as only special modes or forms of the general *attribute* Mind, in the same way as a horse, a tree, a mountain, or a table, are only special forms of the attribute Matter; and he considered that it would be as absurd to endow the original Substance, or Cause, with these special qualities of Mind, as it would be to endow it with the special qualities pertaining to a horse, a tree, a mountain, or a table. All these mental qualities he regarded as but the necessary splinters into which the attribute Mind or Thought is broken as it makes its entrance into the World of Time, like the sputter and foam into which the waters of a placid mountain stream are broken on its edge and confines, when it descends to the plain. They are but the evanescent bubbles thrown up without will or choice of their own, but of inevitable necessity, from the obstructions they meet with from each other; coming into being and ceasing to be; while the One Eternal Substance, with its eternal attributes of Thought and Extension, alone abides. And thus it was that Spinoza with this conception of the World and of Human Life as but the outcome of a fixed and inexorable Fate, fell in his large and massive way into a kind of unconscious but not ignoble Atheism, and so in his dreams lost sight of our petty human ideals altogether; and when he at last awoke and bethought himself, the most that he could recover of them, like a King who had dreamed away his crown, was, as with the Stoics, the poor human joy and serenity, the absence of pining,

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discontent, and misgiving, which the spectacle of this Infinite, Eternal, and Inexhaustible Energy, leaving no loop-hole for freedom save in resigned obedience, was calculated to engender in the philosophic spirit, and which he in his purity and simplicity imagined was all that was needful or right that man should attain.

The attempt to get God, Immortality, and the Ideal, out of the Intelligence, by the analysis of the mechanism of knowledge, having failed; and philosophy having run itself on these lines in the hands of Spinoza, into a practical Atheism, and the annihilation of our ideals; two courses were now open to the Metaphysicians. They could either continue still further the analysis of the Intelligence, and see what would come of it, or they could shift their tents to some other region of the mind, with the chances of a better fortune for the Ideal in the new field. On consideration it was resolved that Spinoza's conception of Mind and Matter as two sides or aspects of the same thing, was premature; that it was too generalized; and in fact that there was no scientific proof of it. For it must be borne in mind that the intimate connexion between the manifestations of mind and the physical condition of the brain and nervous system, which to-day is almost an axiom of scientific thought, was then unknown. The suspicion naturally then suggested itself as to whether instead of Mind and Matter, as with Spinoza, being regarded as parallel and corresponding sides of a common cause, one of them might not rather be found on further analysis to be the cause of the other. The first of the two alternatives open to the Metaphysicians was accordingly chosen, and a still more minute and thorough analysis of the Intelligence I was resolved upon, and two new Schools of Philosophy at once arose; the first, represented by Locke, regarding the outer world of Matter as the real source and origin of all our ideas, of all that can properly be called Mind; the second, represented by Berkeley and Leibnitz, regarding the Mind as the source of all those appearances known to us as the

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outer world, the world of Matter. And the discussion of the problem of knowledge once entered upon, the rival schools became like Spinoza so absorbed in it, that they quite forgot for the time being the real question which the world was waiting to have solved for it, namely as to the existence or not of sufficient grounds for its belief in God, Immortality, and the Ideal, a question which the philosophers were apparently disposed, until pricked to it by the Church and cultured opinion, to leave to the chances of war!

Leibnitz was the first of the great philosophers to enter the field on the side of the Idealists, that is to say on the side of those who believed that the Mind was the real cause of Matter, and that the outer world, in consequence, was but an appearance or after effect of Mind. He conceived the world of men and things to be made up of an infinite number of infinitely small spiritual substances or monads, as he called them, little minds or souls, as it were, of which God was only one among the rest,—much in the same way as the Materialists of antiquity regarded it, and as the Scientists of our own time still regard it, as made up of an infinite number of material atoms or molecules; —and he considered that the difference of intelligence among creatures (and, in consequence, of what image or representation they would form to themselves of the world), was due entirely to the degree of clearness or cloudiness with which these little irridescent monads reflected each other; in the same way as in the great Vedanta Philosophy of the Hindoo sages, the amount of Truth which men can see will depend upon the number of 'veils of illusion,' as they call them, or coloured spectacles, as it were, which are interposed between the soul and the reality of things; but with this difference, that whereas in Hindoo Philosophy, owing to its making a diffused Unconscious Soul its supreme object of contemplation, the mind that shall come nearest to the sight of this Supreme Reality, is the one that like an Oriental Beauty lies in a soft dreamless sleep in which only the thinnest gauze, as it were, conceals its infinite loveliness

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and charm; in European Philosophy on the contrary, and with Leibnitz among the rest, the Supreme Reality being the most clear-eyed Conscious Intelligence, the mind that shall come nearest to the sight of it is the one that is the most wide-awake and clothed with powers of perception as in open day. And accordingly he represented the mineral kingdom as the condition of those monads who were in a dreamless sleep or swoon; the vegetable kingdom as the condition of those who were beginning to stir and show signs of life; the animal kingdom as the condition of those who were alive but in a dream; the human world as the condition of those who were fully awake and self-conscious; and God as the monad of monads, the one that reflected all things with the most crystal clearness, and therefore with the most omniscient and omnipresent intelligence. And the way in which these airy spirits, the dull and the bright, the stupid and the intelligent, are made to keep true to the beautiful harmony of the world, of inner to outer, of Mind to Matter, is represented not as in Geulinx, by God interposing like a watch-maker at every turn to set them so that they shall keep time together, nor as in Malebranche, by God being Himself the omnipresent mirror in which they can all see themselves at one and the same time, but by a 'pre-established harmony,' as he called it, so perfect in its mechanism from the outset, that each in perfect independence of the rest, shall keep time to the music of the Divine Will.

But Leibnitz in this curious and unique system of his, had not quite reached the haven of pure Idealism. For these little spiritual monads had, it will be observed, an independent existence *outside* of one another, and so were in reality an outer world to each other. And accordingly the next move necessary to bring it to pure Idealism was taken by Berkeley, who made not only the external world but all other minds as well, the pure creation of the individual mind. Not that the world outside of ourselves had no real existence *anywhere*, but only this, that on the old principle that no object whatever having extension and

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materiality, be it angel, animal, or man, can make an impression on a purely immaterial substance like Mind, the outer world can have existence in the Mind of God alone, who in turn communicates, as with Descartes and Malebranche, this knowledge to us.

Now as far as the Ideal was concerned, it is evident that these Idealists were able to score an easy victory in its support. For beginning with Mind as an indestructible, immaterial, and indivisible entity, immortality was a natural corollary, and God in consequence, as a spiritual immaterial Being also, was but the natural Cause in which these minds as in a mirror reflected themselves.

The opposite School headed by Locke and Condillac, kept also mainly to the problem of Knowledge, and got over the difficulty by making Matter and the sensations it produces on our organs of sense, the cause and origin of all our ideas, and therefore of what we call the mind, which these Thinkers figured as a sheet of white paper, absolutely blank until Matter and the sensations it causes in us scribbled their impressions and ideas on it, or as a room, dark and empty until the light of the outer world is gradually let into it. And so with nothing in the mind but what comes through the senses, their ingenuity was severely taxed to get out of it either a God or an Ideal World; and in their perplexity, when pressed, they were obliged to fall back on the Church, and on the stock arguments of its Theologians and Apologists, for their belief in a God and in a Future Life. But when the doctrines of this School were carried to their logical extreme by Hume, and by the French Philosophers of the Illumination—by Helvetius, D'Holbach, La Mettrie, and others—nothing was left in the mind but an onward flux of sensations, with no order, coherence, or connexion, no law or cause beyond such chance associations as habit or custom may for the time being have given them. With the soul gone, immortality went also; and with the belief in necessary causation gone, went the belief in God, until at the

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end of the period of the French Illumination, God, the Soul, and Immortality had been wiped out as with a sponge from the purview of men; the philosophers themselves being left with nothing to console them but that love of Truth for its own sake, which is the last flower of the ideal that continues to bloom after all else is faded.

In the lull and pause which ensued before a new School of Philosophy should arise which could restore to men their lost ideals, the world had to draw on the Church for them, on that old Church which hardly beset itself, still hung out its old flag of 'Verbal Inspiration' from its beleaguered citadel, until help from without should come. Nor had it long to wait. For the Metaphysicians who had started out so gaily with Descartes, fondly imagining that they had found a triumphant proof of the existence of God and the Ideal World in what lay latent but unexpressed in the mysterious act of Knowledge, now found to their discomfiture that in the speculations of Hume and the Materialists of the French Illumination, Philosophy had shifted its bearings and veered round to the opposite point of the compass; and instead of pointing the way to God and Immortality as its pole star, pointed on the contrary straight to Atheism. They were obliged, accordingly to give up the analysis of the Intelligence and of the act of Knowledge as worthless for their purpose, and to shift their tents elsewhere. Accordingly in their perplexity they pitched on the Conscience, or the Moral Sense, as the new field of their operations, in the hope that they might there recover the ideals they had lost, and perchance even bring help as well to the Church, and their endeavours seemed at first to be crowned with entire success. The man who wrought this deliverance both for Philosophy and Religion was that prince of Metaphysical Thinkers, Emanuel Kant.

Like his predecessors, Kant had begun by an analysis of what constitutes Knowledge and makes it possible, but he had not gone far before he discovered that no God was to be got

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out of the analysis of that function of the mind. He soon perceived that the mind was no blank, abstract, immaterial entity facing its opposite but unable to cross over to unite with it in the production of knowledge except by an act of God; but that on the contrary it was itself a concrete, complex organism made up of various functions and powers, like a machine with a complex system of wheels and rollers—Time and Space, Cause and Effect, Necessity and Contingency, and the rest,—through which when the raw material of sensation from outer objects is passed in like separate bits of wool at one end, it comes out like a continuous thread of yarn or web of cloth in the shape of organized human knowledge at the other. And he argued that as neither God, the Soul, Free-Will, nor Immortality were to be found in the raw material of Nature which had to be passed through these rollers of the mind, so by no ingenuity could they be got out of it as part of the warp and woof of knowledge. What then was to be done? It looked as if our ideals would have to be resigned after all. But no, stay a moment, said Kant. Those ideas of God and the Soul are intuitive and ineradicable beliefs of the mind, and are besides necessities of thought, as it were, without which our knowledge would be a chaos of impressions and ideas without end, aim, or reason. For even if *particular* phenomena are to be satisfactorily explained by referring them to their antecedent causes, as is our custom now-a-days, still the world *as a whole* would remain to be explained, and to what can it be referred but to that something beyond it and transcending it to which we have given the name of God? Again, without a Soul as permanent and abiding basis for the impressions and ideas of the mind which come and go and chase one another across the field of thought, without this Soul as a single self to which our ideas adhere, and which gives them unity, what could these ideas be but a distracted mob or multitude of impressions, emotions, and sensations without relation or belongings, without meaning, reason or

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significance? But as we cannot get any knowledge or proof of the existence of God or the Soul through the ordinary avenues of the senses and understanding, is it not evident, says Kant, that if we look carefully enough we shall find the justification of our belief in their existence and reality, in some other quarter of the mind? It seemed, indeed, most probable; and accordingly after some search Kant announced that he had discovered such justification in the Conscience or Moral Sense in man, which he declared would be found to point like a fixed finger steadily to the Ideal World—to God and the Soul, to Free-Will and Immortality. For, said he, when Conscience like an Emperor says to a man 'You *must* do so and so,' at the very time perhaps when his natural inclinations all tend in the opposite direction, does that not prove that he *can* obey the command if he choose? for to give an order without the means of executing it, were a stultification. And if this be so, does it not prove that you have a *free-will* which can act apart from and in spite of your natural inclinations and desires? And if a free-will then a *soul* independent of the body on the one hand, and of the successive mental states that pass across it and are affections of it on the other? And if this, again, be true, and if further the commands of this Conscience or Moral-Sense are always *universal* commands, that is to say commands which if carried out would benefit humanity at large, or others as well as yourself, does not that prove that these commands must have issued from a Being who has equal care for all His creatures, and therefore in a word, from the Being we call God? And if further, our indisposition to obey these commands is due to our being like a half-awakened sleeper, hampered and restrained by the drowsy inclinations of desire, is it not evident, says Kant, that as God is the author both of the commands to virtue and the desire for happiness, and, in consequence, must wish the moral man to be happy and the happy man to be moral; is it not evident that if this conjunction of virtue and happiness is not to be had in the present

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life, a future life (if His will is not to be frustrated) must be provided to realize it in? In this way, then, Kant proposed to restore to men those great ideals of the mind which demanded a God, Soul, Free-Will, and Immortality as their basis and support, but which in the hands of his predecessors had been up-rooted by Atheism and Materialism. With the succour thus brought to them in their perplexity the Church and Religion were overjoyed, and the echo of their jubilation has continued to be heard almost to our own time. But the Metaphysicians could not let well enough alone, as it were, and scarcely had Kant's doctrines had time to become generally diffused when his followers put a damper on the new-born hopes of men, by pushing his philosophy to a point where the Ideal so hardly won, had to be renounced again.

Fichte was the first of the followers of Kant to so modify the views of his master as to lose again the ground which that great thinker had re-conquered for the Ideal. He began by taking the Moral Consciousness and Free-Will which Kant had walled off, as it were, in a separate compartment of the mind from the faculty of knowledge, and proposed to bring unity into the kingdom thus divided, by demonstrating that the separate parts of the faculty of Knowledge (the wheels and rollers of our machine) could be deduced in an orderly evolution one after another out of this Moral-Sense or Conscience which he now made the Personal Ego, and in which as corollaries, these categories he contended lay latent, waiting to be evolved. This he did by assuming at the outset that there was in the essence of this Self-consciousness itself, this Personal Ego, a negative or obstructive element, which when the energy of the Ego or Free-Will encountered it, would itself make in its successive rebounds these very categories of Kant, through which when the raw material of the outer world was passed in the form of sensations, there came out the forms of what we call our organized knowledge of the outer world; much in the same way as in Hindoo Philosophy the various

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kinds of knowledge in its different grades, come from the obstructions and diffractions which the pure white light of the Soul suffers when it has to pass through the different 'veils of illusion,' or coloured spectacles, which are successively put up before it; these veils being in the order of their fineness and transparency, first the finest and highest intuitions, then the higher sentiments, then the nobler passions, then the appetites, then the senses, and lastly the gross material body itself; the great difference being that whereas in Hindoo Thought these veils or spectacles are not parts of the Soul itself, but are rather foreign substances that come before it to obscure it, in Fichte they are inherent in the very constitution of the Soul or Ego itself. And the consequence is that when with Fichte the energy of the Soul encounters this obstruction in itself, it suffers by the limitation to which its free activity is subjected, a kind of affection of itself which it imagines to be something coming from the *outside*, and which like a man under a hallucination, it imagines it sees as something existing in a world outside of itself. And as at each revolution on itself it encounters, as it were, a fresh obstruction made up of the new added to the last and to all that preceded it, it imagines it sees some new kind of thing or property of things in the external world, corresponding to this fresh obstruction; in the same way as when white light is passed through a number of coloured glasses put up successively one behind the other, it produces a new colour each time, formed of the complex of all the old with the newest and last. Now these successive colours or affections which the Soul or Ego suffers in its successive revolutions, Fichte undertakes to prove to be precisely those very 'forms of sense' (Time and Space) and 'categories of the understanding' (quantity and quality, relations of cause and effect, of substance and accident, of reciprocal action, of existence and non-existence, necessity and contingency, and the rest) into which Kant has decomposed the faculty of understanding or Knowledge; but with this difference, that whereas Kant

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had picked them up hap-hazard, as it were, and flung them down in an isolated and independent way without connexion or evolution, Fichte undertook to show that they could be deduced from one another in a regular order of succession as stages and landing-places in an ascending staircase of evolution, and all from the constitution of the Ego itself when from the obstructions it meets with it begins to turn on itself. He undertakes, in a word, to demonstrate that Matter itself, Time and Space, and all the qualities of Matter, Mind, and the External World, are really the products of each individual's own mind. The consequence was that as he could not find anything anywhere that had not its origin within the circuit and confines of our own skulls, he could find no place outside of himself either for a God or for an Immortality, and so was obliged to confess that the Moral Consciousness from which in his opinion all our categories of knowledge can be deduced and evolved as by a mathematical necessity, was the only Divinity he knew. And hence it was that he lost again among the meshes of his analysis, all those ideals of the mind which Kant had with so much patience and labour re-conquered and restored to men.

But the ideals which Fichte had lost, Jacobi another of Kant's disciples recovered, only for a moment however, as it were, and as a passing diversion from the ordinary course of Metaphysical Thought. Like Socrates who by throwing over-board most of the stock inquiries of the Greek Philosophers, stumbled by happy accident almost on to Christian Theism and its argument from Design before its time; so Jacobi by brushing away many of the metaphysical cobwebs and subtleties with which his contemporaries perplexed themselves, came on some important truths almost without knowing it, and long before the ground had been fully prepared for them; much in the same way as some old Greek, dissatisfied with the Ptolemaic Astronomy, might by the mere impulse to counter-assertion have struck on the truth that the earth

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revolved around the sun and not *vicè-versâ*, long before the true grounds for this belief could have come within the focus of advancing thought. For having accepted from Kant the doctrine that neither God nor the Soul nor Free-Will can be proved through the ordinary avenues or by the ordinary processes by which knowledge is acquired, but only as necessary postulates demanded by the moral sense in man, Jacobi boldly asserted that the existence of God, the Soul, and Free-Will, were as much intuitive beliefs of the mind and had as much validity, as the belief in the existence of Time, Space, and the External World was an intuitive belief postulated by the demands of our ordinary outer senses. They are all alike, Jacobi contended, matters of *belief* rather than of *knowledge*, that is to say they are the bases on which all knowledge and experience must rest, and cannot therefore be proven by the ordinary processes of knowledge and experience. He contended, accordingly, that Time and Space had a real objective reality, and were not as Kant had contended merely 'forms' of our own sensations, moulds of the mind, at it were, through which the impressions from the external world had to pass before we could see that world, or imagine ourselves to see it, as a world existing in Space and Time. He might have added that when the mind of man is so constituted as to see and believe and to act on and be justified in the belief that the world of space and time exists *outside* of us; to imagine that by any ingenious hocus-pocus of metaphysical subtlety you are going to prove to men that it really is *inside* of them as 'forms of sense' only, is gratuitous. But as he was at bottom a metaphysician like the rest (although he had kicked over the metaphysical traces for the moment), and went about like them with his sounding-rod which he dipped into the mind here and there in the hope that he might bring up the Ideal in his soundings, this was perhaps too much to expect. And accordingly after this irregular improvisation of Jacobi, which scandalized the metaphysicians as much as the early scientific

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sceptics scandalized the orthodox believers in the possibility of perpetual motion, Metaphysics continued on its own proper course as before.

On Fichte and Jacobi, accordingly, followed in due time Schelling, who incontinently threw Jacobi out of his purview on account of his heresy in the matter of *belief* (much in the same way as the orthodox schools of Greek Philosophy threw out Socrates), and continued instead in the course marked out for him by the long line of his orthodox predecessors from Descartes and Spinoza to Kant and Fichte. And although in his philosophizing he went through as many stages and transformations as a grub does before it becomes a butterfly, he nevertheless by the thoughts he added in his prime, pushed the solution of the problems of Metaphysics a stage further on the course which they were destined to follow before they reached their goal. But the precise contribution which he made to the problem will be better seen perhaps if we again cast a hurried retrospective glance over the main steps which had been taken by his predecessors to lead up to it. It will be remembered, then, that Descartes, Malebranche, and the earlier Metaphysicians had figured the World as in its ultimate essence made up of two primordial substances, Mind and Matter, Thought and Extension, which stood facing each other in blank abstraction and isolation like a pair of sphinxes, each unable to cross over and communicate with the other so as to produce what we call Knowledge, without the intermediation of a Deity who stood over them both and interpreted them to each other. Spinoza who followed, imagined he had got over the difficulty by making Mind and Matter, or Thought and Extension, in their ultimate essence but two sides of the *same* thing or substance, and requiring therefore no God to put them in communication. After some intermediate preliminary skirmishing by other philosophers to clear the foreground of the problem of minor complications, Kant appeared on the scene and at once separated the two walls of Mind and Matter which Spinoza had brought

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together, and kept them apart again. He left Matter, what he called 'the Thing in itself,' standing in its ultimate essence stark and naked as before (its properties being skimmed off by the categories) but on the other hand he endowed the mind with an elaborate mechanism of grooves, 'forms and categories,' as he called them, which when the outer world of Matter in its concrete form was passed through them, gave to things all those properties, qualities, and relations which we call the 'knowledge' of the object or thing. When Fichte in turn followed on Kant, his first step was to get rid of the blank wall of Matter which Kant had left standing *outside* of the mind, by withdrawing it *inside* into the mind itself, where now as integral part of the mind it stood as a kind of negative pole or background, a kind of obstruction or chopping-block against which when the Ego or Soul beat and impinged, it was thrown back on itself, as it were, in the form of some definite quality or category of thought, which it now by a hallucination imagined it saw as a quality in Nature; in the same way as light is as black as darkness while travelling through the inter-planetary spaces, and it is only when it strikes the atmosphere of our earth that it is broken into the beautiful blue of the sky. And so the soul continuing to strike against this polar opposite which had been incorporated with it as its unwilling bride, formed at each impact a new category which it applied to Nature, and as these activities were confined within the circuit of the mind itself, the categories which grew out of one another were forced upwards like an ascending spiral, flight on flight, each turn of the spiral disclosing (as when a landscape is seen from higher and higher windows) new and wider vistas, qualities, and relations, which we fondly imagine in our dreams to exist as realities in the outer world of Nature herself. And accordingly when Schelling came to review the ground traversed by Fichte, he saw that although Fichte was right in believing the mind to be in its essence really a bi-polar thing, and not the mere blank wall or abstraction which the earlier Metaphysicians had figured it,

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containing, as it did, the negative pole necessary for the active side of the soul to break itself against if it were to splinter itself into the qualities constitutive of Nature and Thought; yet this negative element could not be the blank wall of Matter which Fichte had brought from the outside and set up in the mind itself. On the contrary he maintained that the outer world was too much in evidence to be thus lightly disposed of, and that let Metaphysics say what it would, Matter and Nature had still an independent existence apart from and separate from the mind. It occurred to him, accordingly, that if he could prove that this Matter too, was in its ultimate constitution no mere blank wall or abstraction as Kant had left it, but in reality a bi-polar thing like the mind; (and this he had no difficulty in doing; for the centripetal and centrifugal motions of Astronomy; the action and reaction, attraction and repulsion, positive and negative, in Physics, Chemistry, and Electricity; the sensory and motor reactions of animal life, and the like, all proclaimed it); and if further it could be thus shown that the laws of Matter and the laws of Mind were identical, would this not prove that both the Soul and Nature, Mind and Matter were the offspring of one and the same Supreme Cause, and that that Cause must in its nature be bi-polar also,—a Being constituted of Mind and Matter indifferently, who constructed the World out of His own inner being, but mixed the elements of His own essence in different proportions in Mind and Matter respectively; putting an excess of Mind, as it were, into the mental side of things, but with just sufficient dash of Matter in it to form that negative or obstructive element in Mind which is so necessary, as we have seen, to evolve its categories, and so to give us an ordered world of objects; and an excess of Matter into the physical and material side of things, but with mind enough in the shape of laws of Nature, to make it instinct with thought and reason.

With the conception of the World as made up of Mind and Matter which faced each other not as two blank abstract

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entities, but as two highly concrete bi-polar substances underpropped by an absolute Being, also bi-polar, as their Cause, Schelling's contribution to the solution of the problems of metaphysical philosophy, practically ends,—his later work falling out of the main trend of evolution and running into the sands of Mysticism and Neo-Platonism. But these two sides of the World although built on the same bi-polar plan, and arguing therefore a common bi-polar Cause, were still left confronting each other as isolated and separate existences. To unify them and knit them together in the same way as they had each been separately unified and knit together out of the bi-polar elements of which they were respectively composed, it was not enough merely to underprop them with an Absolute Being to whom was ascribed a bi-polar nature like their own. That would no more have been a genuine explanation of them than it would be a genuine explanation of the phenomena of life to say that they are due to the 'vital principle.' What was necessary was to trace them back to some Being, and to show that both their bi-polarity and their difference in nature would be the *necessary* result at a certain stage of their evolution, of principles inherent in that Being; in the same way as our present Solar System with its sun and planets and moon, would be said to be truly explained if it could be shown to be the necessary result in Time of the evolution of a primordial homogeneous Force fixed in quantity and existing in the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion, as Spencer in adopting the Nebular Hypothesis has conceived it to be. But Schelling attempted nothing of the kind. On the contrary, as Hegel said, he shot his Absolute Being out of his bi-polar World of Mind and Matter as out of a pistol, (as if he had said that the cause of the loss of hair was baldness), instead of deducing this bi-polar world as the necessary consequence of the principles latent in the Original Cause. Now this last step necessary to knit together the world of Mind and Matter so that they should form a unity, in the same way as Schelling had

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already knit together the two poles of each separately, was taken by Hegel; and the reasoning by which he accomplished the feat, although it has always been a stumbling-block and rock of offence to the non-metaphysical reader, may after what has been already said, be indicated in a general way with sufficient clearness to the intelligible.

What Hegel, then, practically saw was this, that the world of Mind and Matter could actually be seen in the process of being knit together and unified every hour of our lives, in what we call the *act of knowledge;* and that the reason why preceding thinkers had been unsuccessful in their attempts to solve the World-problem, was because they did not see deeply enough into the mechanism of this process of knowledge. With the earlier Metaphysicians—Descartes, Malebranche, and the others—knowledge, as we have seen, was only regarded as possible through the continuous mediation and intervention of God. With Kant all the phenomenal or outside appearances of things were passed like heads of corn through the categories of the mind as through the rollers of a machine, and so came out in the form of knowledge; but their real root and stalk, the 'Thing-in-itself,' as he called it, was left standing outside, unknown, and was not to be brought within the ordinary processes of knowledge. Fichte, on the other hand, got his eye so far on the true method of knowledge as to perceive that the mind or Ego had in itself a negative or passive element, against which when it broke it was turned back on itself in the form of new categories, which in this way it successively evolved from itself, as it were. And so having gathered all the qualities and properties of Nature into itself, it left Nature, the shadow of itself, standing out there as the mere phantom or dream of its own working. But Schelling saw that the human mind were it dilated to ten times its bulk, could no more swallow and dispose of Nature thus easily than a mere crocodile could; and so he left Nature with her bi-polar laws, standing as an independent entity obstinately confronting

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Mind with her bi-polar categories, and refusing to be disposed of. It was at this point that Hegel took up the problem. He began by reproaching Kant for his faint-heartedness in deserting the field of Knowledge, and pitching his tent over the Conscience as the sphere of his operations for solving the problem of the World and the question of the existence or non-existence of the Ideal-World; contending that if we could once understand the true mechanism by which knowledge is acquired, all we should have to do would be to project this process like a lantern image on to the great screen of the world, in order to bring the whole realm of Nature with the bi-polar opposites of Mind and Matter which Schelling had left standing in unresolved antagonism, within the sweep and circuit of its evolving coils. Now what, according to Hegel, is the true process and mechanism of knowledge? To begin with, if we take it as it is seen in its most perfect example, namely the self-consciousness of man, we shall find that it consists essentially in the three-fold movement by which the mind starting from a given point anywhere, goes out of itself, as it were, to observe the world around, and returns again to itself enriched like a bee with what it has gathered; then starting afresh with the new knowledge and experience thus acquired, goes out again in search of more minute particulars bearing on the subject it is considering, to return again still further enriched with new knowledge and experience, and so on. And now if we look minutely into this process of self-conscious knowledge, with the view of ascertaining in what it consists, what do we discern? First, we have the consciousness of our own minds and of the inner knowledge and experience with which we start; second, we have the consciousness of the World and Nature outside and around us; and third, we have the consciousness of the something known to us as the Self-consciousness, which by being conscious at once of ourselves and of the world without, is the agent, as it were, which brings outer and inner together and so unites them in a natural way

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into what we call knowledge, without the aid of any supernatural machinery whatever. Now it is true that Kant also had declared that knowledge is possible only when the outer and inner world are brought together in the unity of Self-Consciousness; but the difference between them was this: that whereas the Self-Consciousness of Hegel is a triple-headed thing, a kind of Trinity in Unity as it were, which moving upwards like the spiral of an ascending staircase leads to ever higher and higher realms of knowledge, or like a torch which by every fresh addition of light it thus receives is enabled to irradiate more fully the chinks and crannies of the darkness which still lies before it; the Self-Consciousness of Kant is but a point, as it were, a merely formal unity which has no other function than that of forming, like the apex of a triangle, the meeting point of the outer and inner experiences that successively lead up to it; and so gives us assurance that they are the experiences of one and the same mind or person and not of two or more. In a word, while the Self-Consciousness of Kant is like a pit or well, the common receptacle of all that is thrown into it but from which nothing comes forth; the Self-Consciousness of Hegel is like a Bank in which all that is received into it is at once re-invested as accumulated capital for the opening up of fresh fields of enterprise and knowledge. Having shown in this way that Mind and Matter, the Outer and the Inner World, are progressively unified in the process of knowledge with its organized triplicity of movement and relations known as the Self-Conciousness, all you have to do, says Hegel, if you would see how the Universe of Mind and Matter *as a whole* has been unified and evolved, is to take the movement of self-consciousness that constitutes Knowledge, strip it of all that is personal, particular, or concrete, and project it into the Universe as its organizing and informing principle; much in the same way as if you wished to solve a practical problem involving the higher mathematics, you would strip it of everything concrete and particular, and reduce it to

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the relations of ideal lines, curves, symbols, and so forth. And now if we take self-consciousness as we see it in the act of knowledge, starting from itself, going out of itself, and returning again to itself enriched with new knowledge and experience, and strip it of all that is personal or particular, in the same way as we might detach the polar forces of a magnet from the magnet itself, what have we got? A unity in triplicity, as it were, of essence and movement which Hegel calls 'the Notion,' and which he conceives to be the agency at work wherever in the Universe Mind and Matter are to be united. It is on this triplicity in unity of essence with its spiral movement of going out of itself and returning to itself in ascending knowledge that Hegel makes the whole framework of things revolve; it is this that is the invisible strand, the 'diamond net-work' around which the World, like a huge magnet, has crystallized and taken shape, solidity, and flesh-and-blood reality; and it is by this that all things are held together in their polar opposition at once of attraction and repulsion.

But the world as we know it, with its bi-polar constitution of self-conscious Mind on the one hand, and its bi-polar constitution of Nature and her laws on the other, which it was left for Hegel to unify, is not, it is to be remembered, the earliest but rather the latest stage in the process of evolution; in the same way as the moon as it now stands confronting the earth, with its own separate identity, its own separate and independent movements, belongs to the latest and not to the earliest stage in the evolution of the Solar System. To get the starting point, accordingly, from which to apply his triplicity of movement and essence, Hegel was obliged to begin at the beginning, namely with simple, pure, undifferentiated Being or Existence; in the same way as in the Nebular Hypothesis we begin with simple, pure, undifferentiated Force, to which we apply the polarizing forces of attraction and repulsion. Starting then from this point, the movement of Hegel's principle carries,

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pure Being, (the positive magnetic-pole as it were within the magnet itself), to Non-being, its polar opposite, from which it returns again into itself, but this time holding both Being and Non-being in solution as it were. This is called by Hegel a *becoming*, and when arrested at any given point this coming to be or ceasing to be constitutes what he calls a *state of being*, and when this definite state again separates itself in thought from everything but itself, it becomes a *limited state*, or what for the first time the ordinary mortal would call a *reality*, a definite *something*, the actual magnet of our analogy. If then we separate this *something* from everything else, and divide it in its relations to itself into still further and further distinctions, we get such categories of existence as those which are known to us as *inner* and *outer*, *essence* and *form*, *substance* and *accident*, *force* and *manifestation*, *cause* and *effect*, *action* and *re-action*, *soul* and *body*, and that interdependence of each part on every other which is the note of organic bodies. And lastly we get that which we set out to explain, namely Mind and Matter in the form of a bi-polar Self-consciousness in man (with its triplicity in unity of movement) on the one hand, and a bi-polar world of Matter on the other; each standing in apparently but not really absolute antagonism to the other; the whole process being analagous to that of the evolution of the Solar System, in which beginning with a blank, undifferentiated and homogeneous Force existing in the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion, you have the whole integrating and condensing, through the play of these opposite forces, into what we call Matter; which in turn throws off the planets, and the planets moons, each repeating the movements of its parents as it were; and all alike, though seeming to be separate, independent existences, being in reality but the necessary and correlated effects following in Time from the primitive, homogeneous and diffused Force in its antagonistic poles of attraction and repulsion. The truth is, this system of Hegel's and the system of Herbert Spencer are practically one and the

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same, only seen from the opposite stand-points, the one of Mind, the other of Matter. Spencer's definition of Knowledge as a continuous process of differentiation and integration, is practically the same as Hegel's description of it as the self-consciousness going out of itself to break itself into a multiplicity of particulars, from which it returns to itself enriched by their re-integration. Spencer, again, evolves the Universe from a simple, homogeneous, undifferentiated Force, by applying to it the mechanical categories of attraction and repulsion, Hegel evolves it from pure Being, by applying to it the polar categories involved in self-consciousness or the 'notion.' With neither Spencer nor Hegel are Mind and Matter the *absolute* opposites they are generally conceived to be, but only *relative* opposites; otherwise they could not be united in the process of knowledge. With neither Hegel nor Spencer is the logic which deals with the World *as a whole* the same as the ordinary logic which deals with the relations to each other of the separate things *in* the world; for while in the latter A excludes B absolutely as it were, in the former A and B being both effects or products of a common Substance, both parts of *one* world, must have something in common, and so not only exclude each other but involve each other as well. Again, both Hegel and Spencer have attempted to deduce Mind and Matter from some common ground that shall include both; but it will be found on close inspection that they have really deduced each from the other; Hegel deducing Matter from the processes of Mind, Spencer Mind from the processes of Matter. But both have failed, because in the attempt to bridge the gulf that separates Mind from Matter each has been obliged to smuggle *into* the process the very product which it was the object of his demonstration to evolve *from* it.

And thus it was that Hegel claimed to have discovered a principle which should account in a *natural* way for the bi-partite division of Nature into a bi-polar self-conscious Mind and bi-polar laws of Matter, separate and yet united, and without

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invoking the aid of the Deity to explain it, as was found necessary by Descartes, Malebranche, and the earlier Metaphysicians; a principle which would account for the categories of the Mind and the phenomenal appearances of Nature as with Kant, as well as for the *laws* of Mind and the laws of Nature as with Fichte and Schelling respectively. It was for these reasons, as well as for the affinity which his principle with its triplicity in unity had with the Trinity in Unity of Christianity, that Hegel acquired that influence over metaphysical and theological thinkers which he still enjoys.

But to return to our point of departure, we have still to ask how this system of Hegel stands in reference to the ideals of men—to God, the Soul, Immortality—with which in these chapters we are mainly concerned? To begin with, it is evident from what we have said, that just as the whole life and work of an individual from youth to age is the product not of one fixed unchangeable mind, but of a growing and developing one, so the evolution of Nature in Time with its living Present and its dead and fossil Past, is in the philosophy of Hegel the product not of a fixed and unchanging Deity, but of a growing and developing Deity rather. And hence it is that when a self-conscious being like Man arises in Nature in the course of evolution, this fact itself is a guarantee that the Deity has Himself become self-conscious. And so, too, when Compassion and Morality emerge in Man, it is the sign that the Deity Himself is just and merciful. So that at each point in the progress of created existences, the Deity will be found to embrace, support, and reflect the ideals which at that time have arisen. Now this mode of conceiving the Deity as a process or growth, has the advantage over the God of Pantheism, that it represents God as existing *apart* from and *transcending* the Universe which He has created; it has the advantage over the God of Philosophical Theism again, in this, that by making Nature a fluid, evolving process *within* the bosom of the Infinite, it enables us to conceive the relation of the Infinite to the Finite in a way impossible in a doctrine in which

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these stand to each other in the relation of stolid and independent opposites.

But hardly had the old ideals been set on their pedestals again by Kant, and in a less degree by Hegel, who had to strain his system to get a personal immortality out of it; hardly had Conscience and the Moral Law been so planted as to point with fixed finger steadily towards these ideals, than a succession of thinkers sprang up on all hands who were prepared to show that this much-vaunted Moral-sense with its categorical imperative, far from being the everlasting rock on which Religion and the Ideal were forever to rest secure, was at bottom only a form of Self-interest variously disguised. Some, like Helvetius, declared it to be only a more subtle form of self-love; others like Hume and Adam Smith, that it was a kind of inverted sympathy; others again, like Diderot, that it was a form of selfishness although one which made for the general good; while in later times men like Bentham and the Mills declared that it was only a form of expediency and enlightened self-interest. And so it was decomposed by one after another of these Materialist Thinkers until in our own time Spencer gave to the analysis its most complete scientific form by treating it from the social rather than from the individual stand-point, and by making it a matter of *race* utility rather than of personal or private utility or expediency. In the same way when Beauty, Love, Reverence, Pity, and the rest were placed under the microscope by these remorseless analysts, they were made to forfeit all their ancient lustre, quality, and dignity, and were all alike declared to be impostors, with plebian pedigrees at the first or second remove. Beauty was resolved into the pleasure merely that comes, through the power of association, from objects whose rougher corners have been fined down in the imagination, or memory by time or distance; or from functions that have ceased to be given to work and are now devoted to play, and so on; while Love was decomposed into a complex of qualities, with lust as its chief ingredient; and Reverence into fear, with its margins sufficiently

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concealed to prevent it from being altogether contemptible and degrading.

And thus it was that the Church and Philosophy both alike undermined by scepticism, could only keep themselves erect, as it were, like a couple of crippled paralytics, by leaning one against the other! Both were wanting in any general Cosmogony into which as framework their doctrines could fit harmoniously; and in consequence the Church continued to hold on desperately to the Mosaic account of Creation and to the Verbal Inspiration, which were to be her bane; accepting with gratitude the arm of the Kantian Philosophy as a temporary support in her perplexity, while the Metaphysicians leant on the Church in turn, and were grateful for a crumb of comfort from her, when their own leaders fell from time to time into Materialism or Atheism.

And thus it was too that Modern Metaphysics, which unlike Greek Philosophy and Mediæval Catholicism had no large general scheme of Cosmogony in which as in a framework the ideals of the mind should have their natural and harmonious setting, was reduced to the necessity of taking the mind to pieces and ransacking it as if it were some old dust-bin, in the hope that justification for one or other or all of these ideals might be found there—with such shifting, uncertain, and unsatisfactory results as we have just seen. The weapons which were forged by the earlier Metaphysicians, Descartes and Malebranche, out of the process of knowledge, and which were to be used with deadly execution against the deniers of God and the Ideal, were by the later metaphysicians, by Hume and the Illuminati of the French School, turned like bayonet points into their own entrails; while the Conscience which Kant had so poised as to point to the stars—to God, Free-will, and Immortality—was so reversed by the Materialists as to point to the earth rather, and to their own stomachs mainly. And what else, indeed, could we expect? To attempt to demonstrate by the *unassisted* human reason that the same human

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reason cannot be got to act at all but by the perpetual assistance of the Deity, is not this a curious result of metaphysical speculation? Is it a whit less absurd than Carlyle's Irish Saint who proposed to swim the Channel carrying his head between his teeth, or than the man who tried to lift himself by his own boots? Again, is not the attempt to so manipulate what the universal consciousness of mankind regards as the *high* qualities of love, beauty, reverence, right, duty, and the like, that they shall turn out to be mere forms of the *low* ones of expediency, lust, fear, utility, and so on,—is this not to utterly stultify and confound alike the common-sense, the judgment, and the ordinary conversation of mankind, which turn perpetually on precisely this *difference* between what is high and what is low, what is noble and what is base in the thoughts, words, and actions of men? Is not this attempt of the Metaphysicians to box off certain faculties of the mind from the rest, and to treat them as isolated, independent entities on which to found conclusions as to the constitution of the world, is this not as bad in its way as the delusions of those perpetual-motion schemers who imagined that by the ingenious device of boxing off one half of a wheel from the influence of gravitation, they would gain their end by its continual pull on the other half? And is it surprising that after all this, the entire method of the Metaphysicians should seem to me utterly false and illusory, and that when put forward seriously as the right method for solving the Problem of the World, it should seem superficial, hollow, and absurd? But as the future both of Religion and Philosophy must largely depend on the answer we give as to the validity or not of these methods of Metaphysical Speculation for the solution of the Problem of Existence, I am compelled to pursue the matter still further in the next Chapter.

But before doing so I should like to say a word or two of a Thinker who can neither be placed exclusively under the category of the Metaphysical Thinkers nor yet of the Poetic

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Thinkers with whom we have next to deal, but who from the peculiar point of view he took up, was enabled to exhibit many of the best qualities of both. I allude to Schopenhauer. The Metaphysicians under Hegel having exhausted the Intelligence or Understanding of all the pure ore that was to be found in it for purposes of a World-theory, and having enunciated what by many is regarded as the true law of the movement of Thought as Thought; and having under Kant exhausted the significance of the Conscience in its bearing on the existence of God, Free-Will, and Immortality; the only part of the mind which still remained virgin soil from which to extract material for a new point of view, was the region of the emotions, sentiments, and passions. And although as a miscellaneous collection they were too contradictory, shifting, and uncertain to afford a steady and definite standpoint for the thinker, they nevertheless in their combined action as character, could be fairly represented by the Will as their practical resultant and outcome. On the Will, accordingly, Schopenhauer took his stand as the central point for his explanation of the phenomena of the World and of Human Life, and succeeded in so turning the world around this will as its axis as to give birth to an entirely new system of Metaphysical Philosophy. It is true that all Religions and Theologies had made the will their central point, either the will of the gods, of God, or of deified men and ancestors, but it was always a will, be it observed, that was directed and informed by the Intelligence. With Schopenhauer on the contrary, the Will is the blind, chaotic, tumultuous and unregulated will of the passions, emotions, and desires, a will which far from being directed by the intelligence, uses the intelligence as its slave. Indeed instead of the will and the intelligence acting together as a unity, as they do in the normal human mind, they are systematically walled off from each other by Schopenhauer, and as natural enemies, kept in separate compartments of the mind. And it is because he has thus split the mind into these

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different divisions and faculties with separate and independent functions and powers, and so reversed their action that they cannot be brought into a unity, as is done by the Poetic Thinkers, that I have set him down as belonging essentially to the category of the Metaphysicians. And yet, inasmuch as the sentiments, passions, appetites, and desires, on which through their representative the Will he took his stand, are not only the root and staple of human character but the secret springs of human action and conduct also, his philosophy dealing as it does with the relations between these, exhibits as we should expect from a man of his natural powers, an insight into human life and character, a penetration, subtlety, and comprehensiveness of view, which are only to be found in men like Bacon, Shakespeare, Goethe, and the other great Poetic Thinkers of the world. And although, owing to the pessimism into which his metaphysical scheme (and perhaps his own nature and temper) drove him, he has lost much of the serenity, sunniness, and wholeness of view of these great masters of human thought, nevertheless he exhibits in his writings a wisdom of life, a power of observation, a penetration into human action and motive, and a fund of wit and humour, which can only be paralleled in their works, and to which the writings of the purely Metaphysical Thinkers are for the most part strangers.

His main position, then, is that the World is the product not of an Intelligent Will as with the Religious Thinkers and Theologians, nor of a purely Mechanical Force as with the Materialists, nor yet of a Spirit realizing itself, as with Hegel and the Metaphysicians, but of a blind Force or Will which like some heaving primæval chaos swarms with broods of appetites, passions, and desires, all struggling like Carlyle's pitcher of tamed vipers, to get on to the stage of existence; and once arrived, all animated with the single purpose of continuing and perpetuating themselves there. For this purpose they make for themselves organs or instruments of self-preservation

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and reproduction; in plants, leaves and flowers that contract and expand, open or shut, and respond to their appropriate stimuli in various ways; in animals, the brain, with the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands and feet, horns, hoofs, claws, teeth, and other the like organs for the apprehension of food or the escape from enemies; while in Man, the self-conscious intelligence which is his glory and prerogative, with its greater range, delicacy, flexibility and subtlety, has primarily the function merely of enabling him the better to minister to these desires. Like a mass of people casually collected in a crowded thoroughfare, the World as a whole with the Will by which it is animated has no end, aim, or reason in itself; it is only the individuals composing it, that have intelligences given them by which to realize their own particular ends with the greatest directness and ease. But the whole being without end, aim, or reason, what can it all mean for the individual but suffering, disappointment, misery, sorrow, decay, and inevitable death, tempered for the lower creatures by the ephemeral pleasures of the hour, and for the higher, by the brief illusory vision of the Ideal which still haunts the mind, but which as it can never be realized, in the end but adds to the disenchantment and sorrow. These ideals, which are the subject of all Art, and which correspond to those perfect and eternal types of things which Plato saw peopling the stars and making music among the spheres, before they were let down into their earthly vestures of decay—these pictures of the Ideal, which cannot be got by any process of addition or subtraction but only by an intuition of the imagination, and which by their aloofness and perfection calm and subdue the spirit, have no more real significance according to Schopenhauer, than has the sight of a well-spread banquet to beggars; being but the perfect realization of desires which owing to the obstructions and imperfections of the actual world, can never be fully realized.

And what then, according to Schopenhauer, is to be done? Existence having its essence and root in a blind chaos of

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tumultuous and conflicting passions and desires lumped together under the general designation of the Will, (behind which however there is no God), and hung out before the soul like the veils of illusion in Hindoo Philosophy to deceive it, what ought Philosophy to do but to search diligently for the speediest and most effective means of ridding us of this world, and bringing it to an end? And when we ask how this is to be done, Schopenhauer replies, by turning the will against itself as it were; and this he proposes to accomplish by means of Intellect which beginning as a slave yoked to the service of the will and its passions, at last when it attains to full self-consciousness in Man and sees that the master of whom it has been the dupe is no legitimate sovereign, but a besotted slave like itself, turns on it and rends it. This it does on the one hand by withdrawing the mind from the immediate influence of the passions, by the calming influence which comes from the contemplation of pure works of Art; and on the other by the mortification of the body and its desires by all the devices of Hindoo asceticism, and by the cultivation of that good-will to others which, as in Buddhism, would help others rather than exploit them, would pity them rather than be revenged on them. In this way the Intellect having cleared the soul of the delusions by which it is enthralled, and having turned the will and its passions against themselves to produce extinction, like those rays of light whose ethereal waves when they strike their opposites, produce darkness; the Intellect having thus done its work, can then sink into Nirvana its haven of eternal rest, like those seeds which in the beautiful metaphor of the great Hindoo sage, after clearing the water in the pitcher of its mud, having done their work, themselves sink to the bottom.

Now it is evident that such a system as this could have no future in European Thought, where the Intellect is always regarded as the master and director of the will and never, as in Oriental Thought, its slave. It is true that Von Hartmann, living closer to Darwinian times, and perceiving the evidences

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in Nature and Human Life of a more continuous and unbroken evolution than did Schopenhauer,—who for each species and variety of thing would have a separate Platonic Idea or Type of Will as its cause, like those old Theologians who in like case demanded a separate act of creation or interposition of God—sought to correct this defect of his master by arming the blind Will with the intelligent principle of evolution of Hegel—the ascending spiral movement of the Idea which we have already seen—so as to give it continuity, meaning, and a definite aim. But as all ended as with Schopenhauer in disappointment, delusion, and sorrow, there was nothing for it but like him to turn the will against itself by means of the Intelligence, and so bring all to extinction again, and to the silence of the Unconscious, as he calls it, from which it originally arose. With this apotheosis of the blind Will as the central principle of Thought, Metaphysical Speculation properly so called ran its full course and came to an end. It had taken its stand as we have seen, successively on the Intelligence, the Conscience and the Will with its passions and desires, and no part of the mind was now left as fresh standpoint for a new theory of the World and of Human Life. And accordingly since then it has reverted largely to the position occupied by Hegel, and all that is left of the laborious structure of Schopenhauer, is the ring of beautiful jewels of wit and wisdom into which, like the snake in Goethe's 'Tale,' it dissolved when its outer metaphysical husk and framework had decayed.

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CHAPTER VI.

CRITICISMS AND CONCLUSIONS.

THE main reason, perhaps, why the Modern Metaphysicians both repelled and disappointed me, was that on all sides of their industry and activity they stopped short just at the point where my interest was ready to begin. In the intellectual region, the categories with which they dealt—Time, Space, quality, quantity, cause and effect, and the like,—were of the cheapest and most elementary character, and could as little be said to represent the subtlety and complexity of the intellectual world, as the foundations of Westminster Abbey can be said to represent the elaborate harmonies and beauties of its superstructure. How indeed, could so shabby an assortment as these, all of which are common to the very brutes, represent the infinite complexity and subtlety, the endless variety and beauty of Nature and the Human Mind? And how could the explanation of them be seriously put forward as an explanation either of the World or of the Human Mind? It was an explanation of the substance of things not of their flavour, of their likeness or difference not of their quality, rank, or degree, of their physics not their vital chemistry, of their botany not their beauty. It was the same when leaving the intellectual region, the Metaphysicians set to work to decompose the other affections and activities of the mind; for after splitting these with much ingenuity and show of subtlety into their component

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elements, as one might a house into its separate bricks or stones, they contentedly rested here as if their work were complete, without attempting to re-unite them by means of the laws and relations that exist between them, into that living whole known as the organized human mind. It was as if boys after taking a watch to pieces and putting its separate wheels and pinions into different compartments duly labelled, but unable to put them together again so that the watch should go, should yet persist in calling this a knowledge of the watch; or as if a butcher after laying out the different parts of a carcass in their respective places on his stall, should call this a knowledge of the animal. Now what I wanted was not so much the decomposition of the mind into its elements, as the re-composition of these elements by means of their relations and connexions, into a living whole again; so that on one emotion or sensation arising in the mind, the others that follow on it or out of it might be foreseen. This alone can be properly called a scientific knowledge of the human mind, and may be seen abundantly on every page of Bacon, Shakspeare, Goethe, Emerson, Carlyle, and the other great observers of human life, but rarely in the works of the Metaphysicians properly so called. I was repelled too, by what I felt to be the intellectual complacency of the men who could seriously imagine that the infinite delicacy and subtlety of the web or tissue known as the mind, and which had taken countless ages of evolution to weave, could be adequately sampled and represented by the few cheap and shabby threads which they had drawn out from its meshes. And after all, with what result? Why, with this, that all that is express and admirable in the human spirit was squeezed out of it by this disintegrating process by which they flattered themselves they were getting its real essence; so that when you read their definitions of what love is, of what reverence is, of what heroism is, of what beauty, truth, and right are, all the associations by which they are endeared to us, all the perfume and delicacy which they carry with them and which as

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their real and true essence they exhale, were driven off them as if they had been passed through a chemical retort, and the very words love, beauty, justice, now that their virtue was all sucked out of them, afflicted you when they fell on your ear, or when you came across them on the printed page, as if they were so many old shrivelled and empty grape-skins. And as for the analysis itself, if it came to that, all this had already been done for me, and with much more thoroughness, by men like Bain, Spencer, and the Modern School of Psychologists, and by means too of distinctions which so far as they go, have a real basis and warrant in the Scientific Physiology and Psychology of the present day. But the worst offence of all in my eyes perhaps, was that out of these little separate bits of coloured glass into which they had broken down the faculties and affections of the organized human mind, they proceeded to compose what they would seriously have us take for a real eye or lens through which we were to see and interpret the phenomena of the world, instead of through the natural eye that has been provided us, the organized human mind as it is,—a crowning absurdity. I missed, too, as I have said, in these Metaphysicians, that insight into the concrete world of human life, that wisdom of the world, and knowledge of men and things, which had been my absorbing interest since my old phrenological days, and which I demanded as a kind of preliminary testimonial and guarantee from all those who should seek to win my confidence for a deeper plunge into more abstruse regions of thought and speculation; on the principle, I suppose, expressed by Goethe, that it is the man who sees farthest into the present finite world, who is the most likely to see farthest into the world of the infinite and unseen.

But my main reason, perhaps, for ultimately rejecting the long line of Metaphysical Thinkers stretching from Descartes to Hegel, was that none of them for want of sufficient scientific proof, had properly grasped and laid to heart the great doctrine of Modern Scientific Psychology—the doctrine namely of the intimate and exact dependence of every thought, impulse, and

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emotion of the mind on the physical structure and condition, the molecular activity, of the brain and nervous system; and I felt that it would be as absurd to ignore this central truth in any great scheme of the World, as it would be to ignore in daily life the effect of the wine a man had drunk on the momentary expression of his feelings, or the effect of the opium he had taken on the quality and texture of his dreams. For I saw that with an entity like the mind as it is conceived by the Metaphysicians, an entity, that is to say, which is independent of all time, space, or matter, and which in consequence can pervade the Universe like an ether or pass through stone walls like a Mahatma, with an entity like this it was as easy a task to get across from the Real to the Ideal—to get a God, a Soul, a Free-will, and an Immortality—as it is for boys at school to scale inaccessible fortresses or to construct impossible bridges over yawning chasms by means of ideal constructions and diagrams on their slates. For from the entity known as the Soul, thus disengaged from body, Immortality was an easy and natural sequence, while the idea of a God was but a natural and obvious inference. But to bridge the gulf between the Real and the Ideal by a real structure of wood and stone, by a mind, that is to say, with a nervous system yoked to it and ready by its gravity at any moment to precipitate the whole structure into the abyss below,—that was quite another matter and one by no means so easy of accomplishment. Hegel, I am aware, is believed by his followers to have accomplished the feat by the happy expedient of beginning from *both* ends at once, but he too, as we have seen, failed like the rest; the only difference between him and his predecessors being that while they imagined they had got across it on the back of their abstract entity called the Intelligence, or (as in the case of Kant), the Conscience, at a single bound as it were, (like the men who in Goethe's 'Tale' got across it on the back of the Giant's Shadow), Hegel professed to have got across by creeping cautiously from both ends at once, throwing out

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bastions and girders before him as he went, until they should meet in the centre. But it was found that the Real and the Ideal, Mind and Matter, although apparently bridged, had actually as deep a rift between them as before; although it had been cunningly concealed by the canopy of phrases which Hegel had thrown over the points of junction.

Now in a work of this kind, whose aim primarily is to indicate as succinctly and conscientiously as possible the successive stages through which I travelled in my mental evolution, with just sufficient illustration to make its course intelligible to the general reader, the full and detailed proof of all the positions taken up in these chapters cannot of course be expected, and must be reserved for its proper place in my 'History of Intellectual Development.' Enough, however, will I trust have been said to show that with this great boulder of the dependence of mind on the physical conditions of the brain and nervous system, which the Metaphysicians had neglected, standing in my way and blocking the ordinary even course of the philosophic stream, all hope of regaining my lost ideal through the analytic labours of these Metaphysicians, would have to be resigned. And accordingly, after two or three years spent in these studies, with my health permanently injured by the overstrain incident on the thought and labour they entailed; with my ideal still unfound and my mind bereaved as of a lost love, I was obliged to set them aside and to turn elsewhere. Not that I came altogether empty away from the study of the writings of these thinkers; on the contrary, and especially in the case of Kant and Hegel, I was enriched by the acquisition of many precious jewels which they had let fall by the way. My only complaint was that they had not solved for me the particular perplexities created by the scientific discoveries and generalizations which had arisen since they had completed their labours. Not that they were not justified in making Mind rather than Matter their standpoint for the interpretation of the phenomena of the World and of Human

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Life; (on the contrary in making Matter and the Laws of Matter, primary, as Spencer has done, no solution of the World-problem, as we shall see further on, is possible at all); but only this, that in taking as their standpoint an abstract entity called the mind, independent of its connexion with the brain and nervous system, they scored at best but a cheap and easy victory, and one having in it none of the elements necessary for a permanent and abiding peace. And yet, before completing this period of my mental history, I almost feel as if some apology were due to the reader for the apparently summary way in which in this narrative I have disposed of these, in many ways the master-spirits of the world, the great players in the game of thought, my only excuse (and I trust it will be regarded as a sufficient one) must be, that had they lived in our own time, and with the immense acquisitions of knowledge which recent science has placed at our command, they would not have wished it otherwise; they would no more have thought as they did, or constructed their systems on the principles they did, than would Plato, Aristotle, or Ptolemy.

But once emerged from this thicket of metaphysical subtlety into the open again, I found myself in possession of certain definite conclusions as to how the World-problem is to be approached, and the method to be employed in its solution, which I had not seen before but which had gradually been impressed on me during the course of these wanderings in search of the Lost Ideal, and which may be set down here as follows,—

To begin with, I saw that just as no subtlety of human penetration or analysis can ever, as Bacon says, exhaust the infinite subtlety of Nature and the multiplicity of causes and agencies at work there, so no analysis of the human mind can exhaust the complexity of its secret mechanism, or the vast and multitudinous chain of causes that have been concerned in its evolution and development, and that in consequence, however useful the results of such analysis may be as *instruments*

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or *agents* for minor enquiries, they cannot either separately or in combination be made the *standpoint of interpretation* for the phenomena of the World as a whole. For just as the relations of a landscape can be got only through the human eye as an organic whole, however much scientists may differ as to the relative parts played in the function of sight by the cornea, the lens, and the retina, respectively; so insight into the World-problem (so far that is to say as it is practically permitted us to see,) can be got only from the standpoint of the human mind as an organized whole, however much Metaphysicians and Psychologists may differ as to the ultimate composition of its various faculties, affections, and powers. Indeed the farther I went the more clearly I perceived that making every allowance for the endless extension of knowledge in the future from the appearance or development of new and higher powers in man; for the present at least, and for practical purposes of life, no adequate representation of the World is to be had except by bringing the mind *as an organized whole* with all its complex radiances, subtleties, poetic intuitions, and so forth, fused into a pure white light, to bear on each and every point as it were; at the same time that we use as instruments of investigation such of its elements as are appropriate in each case for the purpose of focussing the object; in the same way as in ordinary sight the eye as a whole uses now this muscle, now that, to bring the object into view; now contracts the pupil, now dilates it; now swells the lens, now elongates it, as occasion requires, in order to give the object its true figure, proportion, and perspective in the landscape.

In the second place, I saw that if I were ever to attain to such a harmonious view of the World as should restore to me my lost ideals, (not necessarily the old theological ones,) it would have to be reached neither from the standpoint of the mind as such alone, nor from the standpoint of the brain and nervous system alone, with their laws of molecular activity, but from a combination of both as it were. Not from the mind

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alone as an abstract entity independent of and unconnected with the nervous system, as with the Metaphysicians; for with an instrument of such ethereality and subtlety, any feat of *legerdemain* in the way of cutting Gordian knots and bridging abysses between the Real and the Ideal would, as we have seen, be possible. Not, on the other hand, from the brain and nervous system alone or the laws of molecular motion which they obey, as with Spencer and the Materialists and Psychologists; for could these molecular motions be calculated in number, direction, and velocity, to a fraction of mathematical exactitude for each separate act or reflection of the mind, no idea of what feeling was high or what was low, what was honourable, what base in the human spirit could be got out of them, any more than the *quality* of colours could be got from the number of the ethereal vibrations which impinge on the retina of the eye. I saw, in a word, that if I was ever to get an adequate picture of the World, and one that should give support to the ideals which I had lost, it would have to come from the double standpoint at once of mind and of the matter of the brain and nervous system. Not from the standpoint of Mind and Matter as two sides of one and the same thing, in which neither side has its distinctive function but each may be used interchangeably with the other, as in Spinoza; but from such a division of functions that while the molecular condition of the brain and nervous system shall be our standpoint for determining and explaining the variations in the relative strength and activity of the different mental powers, their faintness or vividness, their slowness or rapidity, their mode of procession and the like; the mind itself as mind, its own goldstick in waiting, shall be our standpoint for regulating and determining their relative dignity, precedence, and importance among themselves; shall itself settle the relative weight that is to be attached to reverence or fear, to heroism or self-indulgence, to justice or expediency, to love or lust, and the like.

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And lastly and most important conclusion of all, I saw that if I was ever to find the Ideal I had lost, it was a matter of impossibility that I should find it by the method of the Metaphysicians. As well hope to find beauty in a face by planting your microscope in succession over every square inch of its surface, as to find the Ideal in the mind by the successive analysis and dissection of its separate elements or powers. Like Virtue, or Beauty, or Heroism, the Ideal exists only in relation to its opposite, and you can no more get it without a Real to oppose to it than you can get Good without Evil, Beauty without Ugliness, and so forth; in the same way as if everything in the Universe were dark, there were nothing to distinguish it from light, if all were negative, there were nothing to distinguish it from positive, so if all were Matter, there were nothing to distinguish it from Spirit, if all were Real, there were nothing to distinguish it from the Ideal, and *vicê versâ*. And so it followed of necessity that if there were to be any solution of the World-problem at all which should find room for the Ideal, it could only be had from taking our stand on the mind as a *whole* where all these opposites exist together at once and where alone they can find their proper ranking and precedence, and not from taking our stand on the separate analysis of its faculties, and where you can no more find the ideal than you can find rank in a king independently of his relation to his subjects, or than you can find the properties peculiar to a line by any manipulation of the separate and successive points of which it is composed.

These various considerations seemed to me final as to the advantages which at the present day were to be got out of the study of Metaphysics proper, and from that time onward I put it away from me for good, and except for special purposes as in the case of Hegel and Schopenhauer, I never returned to it again.

But was such a system of Philosophy anywhere to be found, the reader will ask, as one which should fulfil all the conditions

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involved in the above criticism of the works of the Metaphysicians and Psychologists? None, so far as I am aware, that fulfilled all the conditions, for none had been confronted with the complications introduced by the discoveries of Darwin and by the generalizations of Herbert Spencer; but in my forced march through the philosophies of the centuries I caught glimpses of such a philosophy here and there in the works of thinkers who either from their own spontaneous genius, or from the intellectual necessities of the times in which they lived (usually at the end and break-up of a world-period of thought), returned in their thinking to something of the wholeness, the freshness, and the simplicity of the Ancients again. Such men were as the reader may have surmised, Bacon and Shakespeare in the earlier time; Goethe, Comte, and to a certain extent Schopenhauer and Hegel in the intervening period; and in our own time a few on whom the spirit of Goethe had descended, or who by their own genius had caught the new spirit of the time. Of these were Carlyle, Emerson, Ruskin, and strange as it may seem at first sight, Cardinal Newman. On these, for reasons which will appear in a succeeding chapter, I fastened with a life-and-death intensity and tenacity of grip, resolved if possible not to let them go until I had won from them the secrets they had to impart to me. And although none of them succeeded in altogether removing the special perplexities and difficulties under which I was labouring (as indeed most of them had done their life-work before the 'Origin of Species' and Spencer's 'Philosophy of Evolution' had disturbed the placid current of philosophical speculation), they nevertheless besides the depth and riches of their special views on men and things, many of which are good for all time, left me with suggestions as to points of view, and hints as to philosophical method, which were of inestimable value to me. I have called them the Poetic Thinkers to distinguish them from the Metaphysical Thinkers whom I have just passed under review. How I fared with them at this period of my life, what I got

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from them, and what from difference in temperament and in the 'personal equation' as it is called, I was unable fully to appreciate in them—all this I shall endeavour faithfully to record in a future chapter.

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CHAPTER VII.

A VISIT TO CARLYLE.

IT was shortly before the end of my studies of the Metaphysical Thinkers whom I have passed under review, that owing to my growing dissatisfaction both with their method and results I was drawn by the great reputation of Carlyle then at the height of his fame, to the writings of that distinguished Thinker, after having laid them aside some years earlier, as the reader may remember, on account of the difficulty I experienced in understanding his 'Sartor Resartus.' But for some time this second attempt seemed likely to prove as unsuccessful as the first. On this occasion I started with his writings on Social topics, owing to some comments made at the time on his theories by the Press, and took up his 'Latter Day Pamphlets,' opening I remember with the paper on the 'Negro Question' which was prefixed to them, and passing rapidly but with increasing amazement and perplexity through the various papers on 'Model-prisons,' 'Downing Street,' 'Hudson's Statues,' 'Jesuitism,' and the rest, until I reached the end. But if his 'Sartor' had repelled me by its obscurity and difficulty, these papers although easily enough understood, repelled me still more, not only by the views they inculcated but by the prophetic form of their utterance, and the peculiar language in which they were expressed. As a Colonial I was deeply imbued with notions of personal liberty; and these pictures of Carlyle's ideal

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State with its enlightened despot as King, and the rest of society marching submissively to his orders, like those pipe-clayed soldiers whom he so much admired in the Park; with his regiments of the poor and unemployed packed off with spade and pickaxe to Salisbury Plain, there to earn their living under the surveillance of 'Captains of Industry' who with military rigour were to first caution them, then if they disobeyed orders, to whip them, and in the end if they proved incorrigible to shoot them!—all this with his views of the 'Negro Question' where you see the whip of the beneficent slave-owner descending on the bare back of 'Black Quashee' as he sits idling and munching his pumpkins in the sun; and with his conception of a Nineteenth Century Cromwell marching his dragoons into St. Stephens and brutally upsetting the ballot-boxes and the rest of the complicated machinery of the Suffrage,—its 'one man one vote,' its 'representation by population,' and the other ingenious devices for the protection of our liberties which our forefathers had with much labour and sweat won from the hard hand of despotism—all this ran full tilt against my inmost nature and the traditions in which I had been brought up. And although there was much in these diatribes with which I sympathized, as with his righteous indignation when he thinks of those Model prisons with their spacious corridors up and down which the scoundrels of society paced at their ease, while the honest poor in their cobbler's stalls outside, or in their little shops 'with the herrings and cross-pipes in the window,' strove hard to keep body and soul together and to pay the rates and taxes necessary to keep these scoundrels in their luxury; or where he warns the 'idle classes' who think they have 'rights but not duties,' that outside their chamber windows there were 'mere iron-pikes and the law of gravitation;' or again where he pictures the 'patent treacle philanthropy' of Exeter Hall as at last being drummed out ignominiously by a disgusted nation, 'the very populace flinging dead cats at it;'—although all this was calculated to arrest the attention of the thoughtful and give

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them pause, still it was not sufficient to compensate with me for the attacks on personal liberty which lay at its root—that personal independence which intrenched as it was strong in sentiment and tradition in the mother country, burned as I have said in the Colonies, and especially in the backwoods and outskirts of civilization where I was brought up, with the fierceness of a passion. With his attacks on Political Economy, again, with its gospel of *laissez faire*, its 'supply and demand,' its 'cash the sole nexus,' and 'Devil take the hindmost,' I was concerned only in so far as I conceived them to be another form of his general attack on personal liberty; for at that time I had given little or no thought to these questions. Still as he expressly declared that he had in his time been condemned for his sins to read 'barrowfuls' of works on these subjects, I was prepared and even anxious to give to what he had to say the most careful attention and consideration. But the wearisome iteration and repetition of such phrases as I have mentioned, and the wholesale denunciation of the principles expressed by them without any attempt at a formal scientific refutation or proof, was sufficient with me to turn the scale against him, and to deter me from prosecuting the subject any farther on these lines. I felt that however wrong the orthodox doctrines of the Economists might be, these views of his, at least, were quite impracticable. Then again his style was to me a real infliction. With its perpetual repetition of the same thoughts in almost identical language, with its catchwords, its metaphors drawn for the most part from a few stereotyped images—the stars, Hell, the dunghill, chaos, or the bogs,—and repeated *ad nauseam;* with his vague appeals to the Immensities and Eternities, his tone of querulousness, and the monotony of his diatribes, so long drawn out as to lose except in a few isolated passages all their felicity, point, or vigour, while the sentences were so constructed that in their fall they continually outraged the ear by their uncouthness and abruptness,—all this in spite of the unquestionable tone of authority that ran through these

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utterances, produced on me the same peculiar and unpleasant feeling that is produced by the entrance into a society of cultured and well-bred people of a harsh and aggressive boor. Nor did his assumption of the prophet's mantle, with cries and screams and execrations in the place of argument in the treatment of questions which of all others require to ensure conviction the most passionless and logical exposition and illustration, impress me much; while the tone of authority which ran through these discourses, weakened as it was by the endless repetitions, the querulousness, and the impatience which mingled with it all and which was so unbefitting the temper of a philosopher, instead of impressing me offended me, rather, by the violence done to my own pride in so unceremoniously pushing me along a road on which if I were to go at all, I should have to be led and not driven. But if the tone and form and the opinions expressed in these pamphlets of Carlyle alike repelled me, even the high moral point of view assumed throughout with its fierce earnestness and sincerity, served rather to damp and chill than to animate and inspire me. I felt that it was pitched altogether too high for me; and I was by no means prepared for the peculiar sacrifices which it required, and which seemed to demand as their preliminary the flinging oneself down at the feet of some man who should assign to each the precise niche he was to occupy in the social structure, without will or choice of his own —and all for the benefit of some vague abstraction known as the general good. Now I had been in the habit of feeling that no one could be trusted to know what was in a man, and to bring it out, so well as the man himself; in the same way as with all its drawbacks each man can on the whole best be trusted to choose his own wife; and having besides no faith in Carlyle's fabled 'saviours of society,' or excess of reverence for them, I could not consent to have my life and fortunes thus summarily disposed of by some poor creature like myself. Besides I am afraid my ambition was largely a personal one, and consisted rather in the desire to realise some great ideal with which I

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should be personally identified, than to sacrifice myself in the realization of other people's, or for that vague abstraction the 'public good.' The fact is that at that time I had never given a thought to the public good, and so far as I can remember, it never entered into my calculations at all; the utmost that I contemplated as regarded other people in the effort of carving my way through the obstructions which I must necessarily encounter in realizing my own ideals, being to interfere as little as possible with them, to be tolerant and respectful, and to make amends for my own shortcomings by not being too critical of the failings of others. Farther than this I was not prepared to go. The consequence was that all this high morality of Carlyle's, with the prison drill by which it was to be realized, afflicted me as with a kind of nightmare. I imagined I could hear the doors of my prison-house closing behind me, and instead of tending to exalt and expand my particular nature, it served only to depress and benumb it. I felt that however good it might be for others, for Society as a whole, or for the mass of scoundrelism that has at all times by forcible means to be repressed, it would not suit *me*; and thanking God that there was no chance of his ideas being carried into effect in my time I was about to drop Carlyle once and for all, when a copy of the 'Sartor Resartus' again fell into my hands. On opening it casually at the autobiographical sections I was surprised and interested to find that he too had suffered deeply in his early years from the decay of belief, and from the Materialism and Utilitarianism which had set in, as we have seen, on the break-up of the Kantian doctrine of the Conscience, and its decomposition into a mere form of self-interest or expediency; and further that after long wanderings in the wilderness in his search for the lost ideal, he had at last found it and been delivered from his doubt and misery mainly through the influence of Goethe. I was deeply interested in his solution which ran somewhat as follows:—that our unhappiness arises from the fact that in this *limited* world our desires, which

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unlike those of the lower animals are *unlimited* in their range and variety, never can be fully satisfied;—no, not if our poor earth were as big as the Universe even;—but we shall still be longing for something beyond; and that this being so, if instead of dwelling on our own wants we were once for all to renounce them, and think instead of how best we could minister to the wants of others, we should find in this self-renunciation a blessedness more sweet than any poor happiness we can possibly get out of what must forever be the incomplete satisfaction of our own longings. And this feeling of blessedness it is on which Carlyle relies to prove that self-renunciation is the true law of life for man, and that it was put into his heart by God for this purpose. 'Feel it in thy heart' he says 'and then say whether it is of God.' So that if the Ideal is not to be found in the confused vortices of the World, it at any rate, according to Carlyle, is to be found in the human soul itself, and can be brought out thence to shape and guide the life and work of every day to ideal ends. Now all this was very true, but what I wanted was to find evidence of it in the World; and the reasons why this Goethe-Carlyle solution did not meet my own peculiar difficulties were as follows.—In the first place, I did not in point of fact specially complain of unhappiness as such; on the contrary in a world where the Ideal if it exist at all, must be wrought out by the exertions of individuals each of whom being born to die, must in the struggle to realize that ideal be subject to the chances of Time and Fate,—in such a world unhappiness of some kind is a necessity; and I was not prepared to condemn the ground-plan on which the Universe is constructed, merely because I was unhappy. My difficulty was rather this, that if—as was taught by Spencer and the Materialists—intellect, virtue, genius, justice, heroism, and the rest are but molecular motions in the brain substance, in the same way as heat is molecular motion in a bar of iron; and are only forms of self-interest and expediency variously disguised, all alike to end in dust and ashes; if this

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be so, then nothing great or ideal exists in the world at all, nothing worthy of a life's devotion, or, if you will, of a life's ambition, not even of an honest vanity or pride; and the blessedness, in consequence, which was to be got out of self-sacrifice, and of which so much was made by Carlyle and Goethe, instead of demonstrating the existence of an ideal in the mind, only went so far as to prove that the mind could be so manipulated as to get satisfaction out of what was at best essentially but a bad business; much in the same way as a man can be hypnotized and made to feel happy in circumstances or situations where he neither is nor ought to be happy at all. And as I had neither a desire to live to make money, nor for the pleasures of the table, nor yet to gain vulgar applause for some hollow or cheap achievement, my feeling was that if there were no Ideal in the world, and no Being in the Universe higher and greater than man, and if in consequence there were no more significance in the glorious emotion of self-renunciation than in the vulgar emotion say, which Socrates felt on scratching his leg after his prison chains had been removed; then indeed life were not worth living at all; and instead of renouncing it piecemeal, as it were, in small daily sacrifices which had no end, aim, or reason in them, it were more logical to sacrifice it altogether and once for all. I was aware, of course, that a man might sit so long revolving round himself and his own sensations, that in time he would become so hyper-sensitive and ultra-particular that common life, common ambition, and common success would not be good enough for him; that he would want better bread than is made of flour; and for this mood, which was partly my own, the true regimen to be prescribed would doubtless be to be thrust into the common human stream where one would have to take one's place in healthy action in the service of others. But I still felt that though this was a good working rule it did not solve my difficulty, for if the question was to prove that the world had in it an Ideal towards which it was steadily working, the means of demonstrating its existence to

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those who doubted it, ought to be accessible to the natural human faculties; otherwise how, once in doubt, are you to get rid of the haunting suspicion, so paralyzing to all great action, whether in all you are doing for others you are not merely ploughing the sands? I was not satisfied therefore with Carlyle's solution in the 'Sartor,' as feeling that it did not precisely meet my case, and it occurred to me that he might not take it amiss if I were to write to him explaining my difficulty, with the view to a possible interview on the subject. This he readily granted, though strictly stipulating that it should not exceed ten minutes in duration. When I arrived at his house in Chelsea, the street outside was lined with carriages for some distance from the door, and inside in the waiting room a group of men and women all of whom were apparently acquainted with each other, stood discussing or recounting what Carlyle had said to them, or were waiting their turn to go upstairs to see him. When my turn came and I entered the room, I saw sitting in the middle of it at a little table, an old man with grey beard and a thick mop of iron-grey hair, his spare figure encased in a long brownish-yellow overcoat which extended to his feet and answered the purpose of a dressing-gown. In his hand which was shaking with a kind of palsy he held a paper-cutter, and as he rose to receive me with deeply-bent back and tottering gait, I noticed that his face and cheeks had still a rich healthy bloom upon them, and that his eyes (although the lower lids were slightly turned down from age, and showed the red lining) were of a hawk-like clearness and penetration. This appearance of the eye with its everted lids I may observe in passing, together with the high cheek-bones and the deep red of the face, gave when he contracted his brows, which he habitually did, the impression of great irascibility. When he resumed his seat, and the light from the window behind fell aslant the back of his head and the side of his face, I observed as a peculiarity that the upper eye-lashes were so curled upwards that the light which passed over his brow and fell on them, lit up their tips like a fringe. But the unforgettable

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feature of the face was the lower jaw which was so long as to be out of all proportion to the rest of the features, projecting so far forward at the chin as to give him the appearance of being underhung, and was so massive in structure that when he worked it in conversation it moved backwards and forwards like a beam. Not a handsome face by any means, nor with the exception of the eyes a remarkable one; the best representations of him at the time of which I am writing (he must have been close on eighty years of age) being the statue by Boehm, and the picture by Whistler; the worst perhaps, except for its look of irascibility, the picture by Watts in the National Portrait Gallery. 'No,' he began abruptly in allusion to the contents of my letter, 'neither you nor I have had as bad a time as Goethe. He was so depressed by the loss of his ideal as a young man, that he at last determined to end it all by suicide, and feeling that the passive forms of self-destruction, such as letting yourself fall off precipices, or falling on your sword, were ignoble, and that the only manly way was that of the Emperor Otho who with his own hand plunged the dagger into his breast, he procured a weapon, but after trying night after night to execute the deed on himself and not being able to screw his courage to the sticking point, threw away the dagger, and resolved to go on living and to make the best of it.' 'And now my man' he continued 'you will just have to do the same; you must just go on in the best way you can, in the sure belief that the seeds of the Ideal that are planted by God in every honest mind, will bear fruit, and you will in time find the work in which you can labour with satisfaction to yourself and to the world.' All this was delivered in a high key and in a sing-song style as a kind of soliloquy, with his brows knit, and his eyes fixed not so much on me as on some imaginary point on the floor; and then turning and looking sharply at me, he asked 'But what may ye be?' I told him I was a medical man and that I had just started in practice in London, but that I had come from Canada mainly with the view of going in for Literature;—and was just going on to add

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that the depression of mind into which I had fallen made me feel that nothing was worth troubling about, when he stopped me and said in a hard irritable tone, 'Na, na, that winna do. Ye'd better stick to your profession, young man. It's time enough to think of Literature when ye've cleared your own mind and have something worth saying. Medicine is a noble calling.' I felt rebuked, and was most uncomfortable, but without noticing me he continued, 'yes, it is a noble profession, but sadly fallen into quackery in these days. The least known men in it are often the best. The best doctor I ever knew was a village practitioner in Scotland. Man, he could look you through by a kind of intuition in an instant; but the great London doctors that come about me here, drive up in their carriages and are off again (after looking at their watches mainly,' he added satirically) leaving neither me nor themselves better or worse than before;' winding up in a derisive almost bitter tone with 'the public is a great ass!' I knew these doctors who professed to see through your innermost vitals by an eye-glance, and was not impressed by the remark; but he continuing, by a sudden transition and as another instance of the general wrong-headedness of the public in its estimate of men, said, 'Do you know George III. was not the fool he is taken for! In fact he was one of the clearest headed men of his time.' I was indeed surprised, and my opinion of his judgment and penetration was not gaining ground, but he went on 'Yes, there's no doubt about it. When I was writing 'Frederick,' and could get the book or map I wanted nowhere else, I was sure to find it in his library in the British Museum,' adding impressively, 'And I believe he superintended the selection himself.' Having exhausted this vein, he suddenly turned to me as if remembering something, and said sympathetically, 'And which of our authors have ye been reading that ye have been brought into this frame of mind?' alluding again to the contents of my letter. I began to enumerate them in a haphazard way, and had got as far as Mill

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and Buckle and Darwin—and was about to add Herbert Spencer—when he broke in with 'Oh! Aye! Poor Mill! He used to come to me here with his Benthamism, his Radicalism, his 'greatest happiness of the greatest number,' and a' that nonsense, but I had at last to tell him it was a' moonshine,—and he didna' like it. But he was a thin, wire-drawn, sawdustish, logic-chopping kind of body was poor Mill! When his book on 'Liberty' came out he sent me a copy of it to read, but I just had to tell him that I didn't agree with a single word of it from beginning to end. He was offended and never came back to me; and when I wrote to him to ask him to meet some Americans who had come over, he never answered my letter and never came, and I never saw him again.' But as the memory of their early friendship came over his mind, he seemed lost in thought for a moment, and then added with a sigh and as if in soliloquy with himself, 'Aye! but he was a pure-minded man, John Mill!' And then after a pause, and as if he could not refrain from expressing his last thought on the subject, 'But I will tell you what,—his father, James Mill, a great, big, burly fellow whom I used to see at the India House, was essentially by far the greater man of the two.' My traditional estimates of men were by this time so shaken up that I must have looked quite blank as he said this, but he was now in full sail, and with his brow knit and his eyes bright and intense as those of a bird of prey, he continued his soliloquy in his high sing-song voice, looking straight before him as at some object he was bent on rending, his head waving from side to side and his jaw working with tremendous vigour, every now and then being shot forward to emphasize his words, and fixed there until he drew in a long breath and released it again. 'But of all the blockheads,' he went on, 'by whom this bewildered generation has been deluded, that man Buckle you have just mentioned, was the greatest!' and at the thought of him he raised a laugh so loud that it would have startled all Tattersall's, as he says of Teufelsdröck; and then went on as if in an ecstasy of enjoyment of his own

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sardonic humour, 'People had kept pestering me to read his book, and at last I sat down to it in the garden with my pipe, determined to give a whole day to it. But a more long-winded conceited blockhead, and one more full of barren empty formulas about the progress of the species, progress of this, progress of that, and especially of the progress of Science, I never came across. A poor creature that could be of service to no mortal! I would sooner meet a mad bull in the street!' And then coming down to the conversational tone again he went on, 'He had plenty of money I believe, and lived down by the Thames, and had never been heard of before he wrote his book. But the only good thing I ever heard of him was his affection for his mother.' I was now so dumbfoundered and amazed at these estimates of men at whose feet I had sat, that not knowing the point of view from which they were delivered, nor allowing for his habitual exaggeration of expression, I began to feel that the unfavourable impression I had formed of him from the 'Latter Day Pamphlets' was the right one, and that he was pig-headed, narrow-minded, and no longer open to the reception of new ideas, but so fixed in his opinions that nothing could move him; and to this his whole appearance and manner such as I have described it, corresponded—the bitter querulous tone, the sing-song delivery as if unconscious of the presence of a listener, and especially the under-jaw, which when shot forward to give emphasis to his words, and fixed there, made one feel that it would require a crow-bar to shift it! I was on the point of asking him what he thought of Herbert Spencer, with the view of bringing him back to a consideration of the difficulties I had mentioned in my letter, but the fear that he might say something unworthy of the distinguished Thinker by whom I had been so deeply influenced, held me back. Carlyle in the meantime had gone off on to the account of his own early life, relating with entire simplicity and absence of pose, and with a singular transparency of nature which was very charming, incidents of his home life and his life in Edinburgh as a student,

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going off into roars of laughter as he described with infinite zest and sense of humour the various passages that had befallen him there; and then he turned to the subject of Religion. Among other things, he said that when in Edinburgh he had noticed that many of the intellectual lights of the time absented themselves from church; and going on from that, he worked himself up into a riotous humour, exploding in peals of laughter when he thought of the colossal imposture of the Church which could gravely state, as set down by Gibbon, that on a certain day by the merits of some saint or other, so many thousand souls had been raised from the dead! 'Up to that time' he said gravely, 'I was a nominal Christian, but from that hour I saw that the accepted dogmas of Christianity were not true.' 'As for Jesus Christ himself,' he went on 'he was a good young man disgusted with the shams and hypocrisies of his time which his soul could not abide; and venturing with calm indifference as to his fate into the lion's den of the Chief Priests and Scribes at Jerusalem, nobly met his death, as indeed such as he in all times and places have to do.' 'But now,' he added in a tone of bitter irony, 'we have reached the comfortable conclusion that God is a myth, that the soul is a gas, and the next world a coffin; and have no longer any need in consequence, of such heroic souls.' Now this was just the opportunity for which I had been waiting, and before he had the chance of getting away from the subject I abruptly burst in with 'Yes, Herbert Spencer has shown that mind is merely a molecular motion in brain substance as heat is in iron; and that is just my difficulty, and why I felt that your explanation in the 'Sartor' did not quite'—'meet my case' I was going to say, when he contracted his brows like a hawk, and shrieked 'Spencer! shewn!' and went off into a peal of derisive laughter that almost raised the roof, as he thought of him; and after a pause, and in allusion perhaps to the extent of Spencer's writings, he exclaimed contemptuously, 'An immeasurable ass!' Then after another explosion over Cabanis, who taught that

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thought was secreted by the brain as bile is by the liver, he went on 'And so ye have been meddling with Spencer have ye? He was brought to me by Lewes, and a more conceited young man I thought I had never seen. He seemed to think himself just a perfect Owl of Minerva for Knowledge?' And then looking fiercely at me 'ye'll get little good out of him, young man!' With this, my discomfiture, irritation, and disappointment were complete. But the ten minutes had long elapsed, and looking at the clock he rose and with great cordiality, and as if we had had the most pleasant time imaginable, expressed the hope that he might hear from me again, and saw me to the door. As I walked home the impressions left on me by this strange interview were very mixed; the preponderating one being that he was a very overrated man; that he was querulous, cantankerous, and altogether too critical and exacting for ordinary humanity; and that he was so wrapped up in his own opinions as to be no longer capable of new ideas. And yet the simplicity, naturalness, and charm with which he had related the incidents of his early life, as well as his world-wide reputation which I felt could not have been got for nothing, gave me pause; and when I remembered the power and pathos of many of his descriptions in the 'Sartor,' I resolved, especially as he had not answered my questions, that I would now get and study those works of his that were written in his prime, and before poverty and dyspepsia and disappointment had soured his temper, and a naturally exacting and querulous disposition, combined with a Puritanic severity of moral judgment in all things, had put him out of sympathy with the men, measures, and institutions of his time.

I started this time, I remember, with his 'Life of Sterling,' which to my surprise I found had been written after and not before the 'Latter Day Pamphlets.' I was charmed with the softness and loving gentleness of tone which pervaded it, (so different from the roughness of the Pamphlets); with its

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tolerance, its sympathy, its almost paternal indulgence and generosity of estimate, and with its exquisite pathos—all of which showed the other side of Carlyle's nature, and almost atoned to me for the harshness and brutality of his conversation. From this book I passed on to his early Essays, those noble productions which marked the advent of a new spirit and power in English Literature, with their critical sanity and sobriety, their strong common-sense, their moral elevation and sincerity, their intellectual penetration and catholicity of culture, and the absence of all mere smartness,—of epigram, pun, or other petty literary artifice; works which took serious literature out of the hands of the mere *littérateur* who had played the clown too long, and made it the moral force it is to-day. These essays, together with the 'Sartor,' were my chief literary food for months and even years, and it was owing largely to the noble panegyrics on great literature scattered through them, that I was kept steady to my own poor task through years of disappointment and failure. And then it was that I saw that the Carlyle of the Pamphlets, the bitter, querulous, exacting and fault-finding Carlyle was not the only or, indeed, the real Carlyle, but was the Carlyle of neglect and disappointment, and of that isolation which befalls the man who is placed in a society and environment with whose aims and methods he has no sympathy, and which has turned a deaf ear to all the convictions that lie nearest his heart.

Now among these Essays there were two in which Carlyle's mode of viewing the world of the Past and the Present were practically summed up; as indeed they were the works by which he had attracted the attention of Mill, Emerson, and the other rising young thinkers of England and America. These were his essay on the 'Signs of the Times' and his essay on 'Characteristics' and from them when carefully read, the secret of his dissatisfaction with all modern institutions political and social, and, in consequence, of the diatribes and denunciations with which his 'Latter Day Pamphlets,' his

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'Past and Present,' his 'French Revolution,' and his 'Frederick the Great' are filled, is clearly visible. Broadly speaking we may say that the object of the 'Signs of the Times' was to show that the great and fruitful ages of the world were those in which men acted in a body, from some one or other of the great primary passions or emotions of the heart—from Love, or Hate, or Fear, or Admiration, or Religion, as in the rise of Christianity and Mahommedanism, in the Crusades, in the Reformation, and in the French Revolution. In these ages he shows that the aim of the society and the aim of each of its members being the same, the mind of man acts as a single undivided force, with all its powers yoked to the service of the dominant emotion or passion of the time, and therefore works as unconsciously and smoothly as a wheel in a large and well-oiled machine; every side of its nature being in full activity, and every ideal being already provided for in the dominant aim, emotion, or passion of the society itself. From these ages, whatever the immediate results may be, the world emerges transformed and raised to a higher social or moral plane.

In the transitionary or unfruitful ages of the world, on the contrary, in which society merely marks time as it were, awaiting the next move that is to raise it to a higher stage, men act not from any great passion or emotion common to all the members of the community or society, but from passions and emotions private and peculiar to themselves, and not, therefore, at one with those of their neighbours, but antagonistic to them rather. The consequence is that as they have neither a common political, nor social, nor religious goal to unite them, they can only be kept from preying on each other by the policeman, or by such mechanical devices as the ballot-box, representation by population, universal suffrage, and the like; each one having to find out by his own thought and analysis, his religion, philosophy, or social and political creed and ideals for himself. In the essay on 'Characteristics,' Carlyle traces

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the baleful consequences of this conscious analysis of Religion and Philosophy and of all things human and divine into their elements with the view of finding out the truth for oneself, (as contrasted with the unconscious activities of the mind when these ideals are ready-made for us) with masterly penetration and force; and from a point of view so central and commanding that the essay is as fruitful and nourishing to-day as it was at the time it was written. In both of these essays as well as the 'Sartor Resartus' and in his interpretation of Goethe's 'Tale,' he sees and traces with unusual clearness and depth as well as with philosophical sobriety and calm, the parts played in Modern Civilization by Religion, Philosophy, Science, Metaphysics, and Material and Social Conditions. As a result of his survey he concludes that the present age is an age of transition, an age of Machinery; and throwing as he did from nature, temperament, and training, so much more weight on Religion and Morality than on Science, Politics, and the Arts of Life, he was led as he grew older to so disparage the latter, that although in his early writings he had proved that the ages in which machinery and the calculations of political and social expediency were predominant, as at present, were both necessary and inevitable stages in the evolution of Society, he arrived at last at the point where he would allow them no value at all. Hence the exaggerations and denunciations of his later writings, his apotheosis of tyrants, and his panegyrics on the methods of brute force—all of which by mixing and confounding the *rôles* of prophet and preacher with those of poet and thinker, have weakened his influence and destroyed his philosophical fame. And yet when I consider all that his writings did for me, my conviction is that until he took up the screaming *rôle* of prophet and preacher, no intellect more original or penetrating, more comprehensive or subtle has appeared in England since the days of Bacon and Shakspeare.

In the next chapter when I come to compare his work with that of the other Poetical Thinkers with whom I have classed

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him, I shall endeavour to let the reader see precisely what it was he did for me in the higher regions of Thought. In the meantime I have only to add that it was by his writings that I was naturally led to the writings of Emerson,—a Thinker by whom I was even more influenced than by Carlyle,—and from them both to the writings of their common master, Goethe.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERSONAL EQUATION.

I WAS led, as I have said, from the study of Carlyle to the study of Emerson, who has always been so intimately associated with him in the public mind; and I still retain a vivid recollection of the despair into which I fell when I attempted to read him for the second time, having put him aside, as I had Carlyle, some years before, owing to the difficulty I found in understanding his little book on 'Representative Men.' I began this time, I remember, with his Essays, starting with the first of the series, that on 'History,' I read the first sentence; it was an enigma; I passed on to the second; it was still more so; then to the third and fourth with increasing bewilderment and mystification, until when I reached the end of the first paragraph I was fain to confess as he himself somewhere says of Life in general, 'All is riddle, and the key to one riddle is another!' I started a second time, bending all my powers of speculation with redoubled concentration and attention on these mystic utterances, but again could make nothing of them. It then occurred to me that the concrete illustrations might help me, and I dipped in here and there among them, picking them out one by one; but they turned out to be almost as mysterious as the run of abstractions at the beginning, and it was not until after some time and trouble that I began to get an inkling of what it was all about. At last by shuttling

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backwards and forwards and trying each of the illustrations in turn to see if it would fit one or other of the abstractions as its key, I succeeded in getting a pretty fair idea of the drift of the Essay as a whole. But at what a cost! And the worst of it was that the same difficulty had to be encountered with each of the essays in turn; the reason being that Emerson had everywhere withheld the principle that was the key to the particular essay, or had wrapped it in such a mystic form of words that it passed the ordinary comprehension to understand it. It was a mistake, as I now think, and must have cost him thousands of the best readers; and yet do what he would, the essays could never have been made altogether easy reading. For the separate sentences being the result of separate acts of insight or observation, are not to be apprehended like a train of physical or mathematical reasoning where each proposition hangs on to the skirts of the one before it, and so can be followed by the ordinary intelligent schoolboy; they are rather separate aspects or sides, as it were, of some common spiritual principle which they illustrate, and around which as their common centre, like signs of the Zodiac, they lie without connexion among themselves, and so can be seen only by those who have had a wide experience of life, and are possessed of natural gifts of insight and observation. And hence I have always regarded these essays of Emerson as a kind of touchstone of intellectual power and penetration. But of them all the one that gave me most trouble and was most difficult to follow, was the essay on 'Experience.' In it the leading ideas of most of the other essays exist in combination, and I must have spent more time in trying to unravel it than on any other piece of writing of equal length whatever, with the exception, perhaps, of some parts of Hegel. And as in my judgment it is, perhaps, the greatest essay on human life that has ever been digested within the compass of so few pages, it may not be out of place if I venture to offer some suggestions that may help the reader to an understanding of the ground-plan of an essay which Emerson has

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inlaid with such precious mosaics of thought. If then we begin by figuring the human mind on the one hand, and the world through which it passes from youth to age on the other, as two cylinders which are in contact with each other and which roll continually on each other, each turning on its own axis; and if we further represent the mind which in each person starts with a special bias, temperament, or tendency, known as the nature of the individual, as the smooth, hard, outer surface of the one cylinder, it is evident, is it not, that if there were no holes or openings in this cylinder, it might roll for ever against its opposite cylinder the world, and like the lower animals, would gain nothing from experience, but would go on doing and thinking the same things over and over again for ever. But, says Emerson, however much the minds of men may be shut up within themselves, as it were, by the hard rind of temperament and natural bias, there are always openings in them through which the Universal Spirit or Soul of the World has entrance to our souls. The consequence is that as we pass through life, when one of these openings in the mind, falls opposite some new or strange fact or experience in the world, that fact or experience will suddenly and when least expected be found to have entered through the opening and slipped magically into the mind, there like a seed, to germinate and grow. Sometimes it is a casual remark dropped by a friend in an open or serious hour, sometimes an incident of the wayside or in the street, sometimes an exceptional natural fact that arrests attention, or a winged and magic word in a book; sometimes it is the death of friends or children, the reverses of fortune, disappointed hopes, loves, or ambitions, or the satieties of society and the world. And hence it is with men as with barrel-organs, it is the particular pins in the one cylinder which happen to gain entrance through the openings in the other, that determine what each man's moral and spiritual experience shall be, and in consequence, the tune his life shall play; and hence it is too, that unlike the lower

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animals, no two tunes are quite the same. Now in this simple framework (which however, as we shall see, I myself by no means accept) Emerson has contrived to work in thoughts on human life more central and commanding, more ultimate and final, and of more universal application than are to be found within the same compass in the literature of any age or time, thoughts which rise to the mind as naturally and spontaneously when the deeper secrets of life are in question, as proverbs do in its more obvious and superficial aspects. For penetration and depth Bacon is cheap and superficial in comparison. Let the reader who has been baulked by the difficulty of the Essay on 'Experience' try it again with the simple key I have given him, and say whether this is not so. What a fine piece of insight, for example, is the following, 'A man is like a bit of Labrador spar, which has no lustre as you turn it in your hand until you come to a particular angle, and then it shows deep and beautiful colours. There is no universal adaptation or applicability in men, but each has his special talent, and the mastery of successful men consists in adroitly keeping themselves where and when that turn shall oftenest have to be practised.' But every essay is full of such gems. Take for instance the following, in reference to the illusion by which men have a tendency to attribute to the men whom they admire for particular traits, an all-round completeness and excellence, 'On seeing the smallest arc we complete the circle.' Or this, as a definition of character, 'Character is moral order as seen through the medium of an individual nature.' Or again, in reference to the way in which we are dominated by general ideas or abstractions, by mere phrases or names, such as king, nobleman, clergyman, policeman, etc., in the teeth of adverse facts, 'General ideas are essences, they are our gods.' Or lastly, this on self-reliance, which was a great stimulus to me personally, 'Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and

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Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.' Nowhere indeed, will you find greater penetration and profundity, or greater refinement and delicacy than in these essays, so much so that whenever I come across a thought of more than usual penetration or distinction among recent writers, as in Stevenson, or Ibsen, or Meredith, or in some of the work of Olive Schreiner, I am at once reminded of Emerson; and rarely do you come on a remark of universal application anywhere, but it can be paralleled and matched by one of similar import in his works. I have only just read again for purposes of this chapter, after a lapse of ten or fifteen years, the essay on 'Experience' of which I have just spoken, and I am bound to confess that my opinion of its merits remains the same as before. No increase of experience or reflection during the intervening years, has enabled me to add or suggest aught by way of commentary on these great and penetrating observations on human life, that is not either more superficial or less true. It is not that I do not differ profoundly from him as to the truth of the general framework which I have already described, and which he has inlaid with such precious gems of thought; I refer, rather, to his isolated observations and reflections on all that concerns human life and the laws and operations of the human mind and heart. But unfortunately these writings are robbed of half their value owing to the difficulty of understanding them. I trust some day to make them more accessible, by furnishing the reader with such a preliminary account of the principles involved in each essay, as will make the understanding of them as easy to the intelligent student of thirty, as a page of Macaulay or a column of the 'Times.' For until Emerson is understood, no observer of human life making any pretension to originality can, in my judgment, consider his reputation safe, or his work free from the danger of being undermined by this great master of human thought.

From this panegyric which I have for years been longing to

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utter, the reader will already have guessed that in my sympathies and bent of mind I have much greater affinity with Emerson than with Carlyle; and so it is. For although as we shall see farther on, their intellectual mode of viewing the Universe as a whole and in its largest construction was practically the same; in all that concerns conduct and action and in the estimate they put on things, they were almost diametrically opposed. And hence it was that while Carlyle ran counter to my Colonial passion for personal independence, and damped my youthful ardour to do something on my own account by the exaggerated importance he attached to our each finding some high-handed despot to fall down before; Emerson stimulated me by his more manly doctrine of Self-Reliance, and by the way in which he opened up to men all the avenues of intellectual, moral, or social power, according to the measure of their genius or virtue. If Carlyle, again, offended what I may be pardoned for calling my sense of intellectual dignity, by the brutal way in which he proposed to thrust his political and social dogmas down the throats of all and sundry, without distinction; Emerson, on the contrary, caressed and flattered the self-respect of his readers by the deference with which he approached them, and by his offer to throw down the keys of his castle to whatever son of Adam should legitimately claim them by virtue of the possession of new and higher truths. Then again, if Carlyle outraged my ear by the uncouthness and barbarism of his later writings, and my sense of form and measure as well as of philosophic decency, by his shrieks and groans; Emerson drew me on by the simplicity and dignity of his utterances, by their urbanity, serenity, and freedom from exaggeration and personal abuse. And lastly, if Carlyle depressed me by preaching an ideal of political and social morality and self-abnegation quite beyond the power of my poor unregenerate nature to attain; Emerson comforted me by the assurance that I could give to personal ambition its fullest rein—provided always, that it was on a moral basis,

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and that I was willing to pay the cost in spirituality which all undue worldly activity entails. For although his writings everywhere exhale the highest morality as their essence, his attitude, nevertheless, is always that of the philosopher, never that of the preacher or professional moralist. And not having pitched his morality too high for the present world, as Carlyle did, he is nowhere led into empty denunciations of the world because it has not yet reached the Ideal, but contents himself, as he says of Goethe, with quietly placing a ray of light behind the dark, tortuous, and recalcitrant facts of life, in the belief that when men see what the truth is, those whom it concerns will themselves take steps to realize it, without being goaded to it either by the whip of the despot or the shrieks of the philanthropist or moralist. He saw, in a word, that morality depended so much on environing conditions, that the standing iniquities of the world were not to be blown down like the walls of Jericho, merely by trumpet-blasts of denunciation. And yet I must confess that after a time I more or less cloyed of so much intellectual sweetness and serenity, of this majestic calm so approaching to moral indifference (in appearance at least) in the face of the scarlet iniquities of the world, and began at last to long for a little more of Carlyle's fiery vehemence and righteous indignation. I felt somewhat like Sir David Dundas who when Lord Rea exclaimed at the sight of the immoralities of the time 'Well, God mend all!' replied 'Nay, by God! Donald, we must help Him to mend them!' Otherwise, Emerson, along with Goethe, has ever been for me, and still is, in temper, tone, and point of view, the ideal philosopher.

From the study of Emerson and Carlyle I was naturally led to the study of Goethe. But I soon found, that like the Will-o'-the-Wisps who in the marvellous 'Tale' to which I have so often referred, contrived to lick out all the veins of gold from the colossal figure of the Composite King, these thinkers had already licked out most of the veins of wisdom from the

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great and many-sided works of their master, and so had left me comparatively little hard reading to do. The consequence was that with the exception, perhaps, of parts of 'Faust,' and 'Wilhelm Meister,' the 'Tale,' and his collection of 'Maxims,' my reading of him at that time was rapid, and in a measure perfunctory. But I found in him all the wisdom, penetration, and many-sidedness which I had been led by Carlyle and Emerson to expect; and I found besides, repeated in him in ever-varying application to the matter in hand, the solution of the practical problem of life which I had got from the 'Sartor,' namely that we were to waste no time over insoluble problems either as to this world or the next, but for all doubt, uncertainty, or irresolution, whether practical or speculative, we were to find the remedy in Work and Action, and in cheerfully renouncing ourselves for the benefit of others; that we were to apply the Ideal which exists in us all, to the common life of every day and to the task or duty that lies nearest us, in order that we might impress on the transient, fleeting, and imperfect Present, something of the stability, the permanence, and the beauty, of Eternity; and for the rest, we were to leave all to the Higher Powers. But there was one doctrine that I found in Goethe, which I did not find in Carlyle or Emerson, and which for reasons we shall presently see, they were not able fully to appropriate. It was the doctrine that all the higher powers and sentiments proper to man, such as Reverence, Gratitude, Chastity, love of Truth, of Justice, and so on, are really not natural products at all, but like the fancy breeds of dogs and birds, are artificial rather, being the result of centuries of cultivation under the constant pressure of force or of public opinion; and are only to be kept from relapsing again to the wild stock, as fancy breeds continually tend to do, by an incessant and unremitting attention and care. And hence it was that he preached as the gospel of salvation for all, an all-round and never-to-be-relaxed Culture. Reverence, for example, is regarded by him as an artificial product reared by constant

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cultivation through long ages from the vulgar element of Fear, and which, as being necessary for the progress of mankind, is none the less natural and inevitable in the scheme of things, because it has been delegated and entrusted to men to develop for themselves under the guidance and example of certain highly favoured individuals. And accordingly, in 'Wilhelm Meister' we find him advising the training of youths from their earliest years in the practice of it, by suitable exercises of act, sign, and symbol,—reverence for what is above them, reverence for their equals, and more than all, reverence for what is beneath them—that 'Worship of Sorrow' which it was the mission of Jesus Christ to introduce into the world, and which once here, can never, Goethe thinks, be suffered again to pass away. Gratitude, again, Goethe tells us is an artificial product, which he set himself sedulously to cultivate in himself by recalling at stated intervals the benefits he had received from others, and the kindnesses that had been done him, by dwelling on these kindnesses and setting them before his imagination in their most appropriate and agreeable light. The love of Truth, again, which he himself cultivated so laboriously during his long life, is not, he tells us, natural to man as the love of error is; for instead of flattering us like error, with the sense of our unlimited powers, it on the contrary places limits on us on all sides. Chastity, too, falls under the same category, as not natural to the human animal; for as Renan says, thousands of women had to be stoned to death before the seventh commandment could be recognized as sacred and binding on all. And so too with the love of Justice, and the rest.

Now all this which is profoundly true, and which runs in harmony with the most certain facts of modern evolution, could neither be recognized nor assimilated either by Carlyle or Emerson. Not by Carlyle; for he did not believe, for reasons that will afterwards appear, that the higher attributes of man were delegated to him by successive increments, in the gradual process of Evolution; but Puritan as he was by temper

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and breeding, he believed them to have been implanted by the Creator entire and complete from the beginning; and that the differences between men in regard to them were due entirely to perversions of the will; to disobedience, in short, which was to be eradicated not by the slow and gradual culture of the race, but by the beneficent despot and his whip. Nor could this doctrine of Goethe's be appropriated by Emerson; for he, again, believed that man lay open on one side of his nature to the entire mind of God, which rolled in and out of him like the ocean tides in some inland stream; that reverence, justice, gratitude, truth, and so on, were the influxes from thence, casual and intermittent in the ordinary course of life (through the holes of the cylinder in our former analogy), but in full tide in the eminent instances of 'conversion,' of 'illumination,' of 'vision,' etc., as with Paul, with Boehme, and with Swedenborg. So that when the tide is in, as he would say, we become saints, or geniuses, or heroes; when it is out, we become sinners and dullards and cowards; or as he somewhere expresses it, 'we are now gods in nature, now weeds by the wall.' To a man holding such a doctrine, Goethe's belief in the growth of Virtue, Reverence, Truth, Chastity, and Humanity, only by the slow process of assiduous cultivation, must have been an offence, and could neither be appropriated, nor woven into his own system of thought.

Now although I felt this doctrine of Goethe to be true, and his prescription of an all-round Culture reasonable in consequence, it nevertheless fell off my mind at the time without producing any result. For nothing was farther from my thought then, than the wish to so prune and trim and restrict myself on all sides as to make myself more like what a man should be, and what, if the world is ever to be made worthier of the ideal in the mind, he must become. No, what I wanted was not to make *myself* approach nearer to the ideal of what a man should be, (and that, I take it, is the highest task a man can impose on himself), but first as we have seen, to ascertain

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whether the ideal itself had any real existence or not; and if it had, then instead of trying to trim myself as far as might be to the pattern of this ideal, to clear a space for myself rather, in which my nature such as it was should have room to disport and spread itself,—ideals, ambitions, eccentricities, crudities, vulgarities, and all! And accordingly I was inclined at first to vote Goethe an exquisite and something of a bore. I did not see that however necessary it may be for the world, that the great masses of men should thus, as Emerson thinks, push their individualities to the utmost, the endeavour of Goethe to so prune, restrict, or stimulate all the sides of his nature as to bring them up to a general rotundity, was the first duty of one aspiring to the rôle of a philosopher. Nor did I then see how much more virtue it requires in a man to thus severely discipline himself, than it does to struggle merely to gain for himself a vantage ground on which his crudities, vulgarities, sensualities, pieties, and idiosyncracies generally, may like a garden of overgrown cabbages have the whole field to themselves! But besides this, there were other peculiarities in Goethe which at the time of which I am writing lent themselves to my somewhat indifferent feeling in regard to him. There was a certain softness and absence of back-bone, I felt, in some of his writings, a want of snap and 'go' in his characters, a certain undue emphasis laid on trifles, on eating, drinking, and love-making, which after the severity of Carlyle and Emerson, went far to my mind to justify Jeffrey in the charge of insipidity and even vulgarity which he brought against him. And then, again, I was to a certain extent out of patience, as Carlyle was, with what I thought were his *dilettantisms* and with the large tract of his writings in which æsthetic standards—art for art's sake and the like—are set up. For like those young painters who used to regard no subject less magnificent than some great historic theme as worthy of their brush, so nothing less than some monumental History or System of Philosophy or Politics seemed to me at that time to be worthy the dignity of

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Literature, and I can remember always feeling a shade of contempt come over me when I thought of Thackeray with his big, burly, manly frame, spending his life in writing love-stories. It was enough for me that eating and drinking and falling in and out of love had, like the measles, to be undergone and endured, but to elevate a description of it all into literature, under the pretence of delineating what is called human nature, seemed to me a degradation. It had not then, I admit, been carried as far as it has been since by Zola and Flaubert or even by Tolstoi who in one of his books makes each particular cough and expectoration of one of his characters who is suffering from consumption, call for a separate comment; but the philanderings and vulgarities of Wilhelm, Philina, and the rest carried through volumes with the minuteness of a catalogue, afflicted me much as George Eliot's characters in the 'Mill on the Floss' did Ruskin, who declared that their conversations were about as important and worthy of record as the 'sweepings of a Pentonville omnibus.' I did not see then as I do now, that the handling is all, or as Carlyle has it, 'What matters what the material is, so that the form thou give it be poetic?' and that by penetration and insight, and skill in the art of presentation, the deepest truths can often be got out of the poorest and simplest materials. And it was only when I perceived that these cheap and uninteresting figures which throng the pages of Goethe and occupy so apparently disproportionate an amount of his time and attention, were but means to his great end of a universal culture, that I became reconciled to them. But in his handling of great themes he was always supreme. The ease and naturalness with which he gives all things their true focus so as to bring out their hidden bearings, relations, and proportions; the massiveness, serenity, and repose of his judgment; his intellectual intuition and clairvoyance, as seen in the 'Tale' for example,—all made me feel before I left him that we had in him the supreme legislator of souls in the modern world as Plato was in the Ancient.

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Bacon I had already read when occupied with the Metaphysical Thinkers, and was charmed with the contrast he offered to them, both in his method and aims. Indeed in him the whole difference in these respects between the Metaphysical and Poetic Thinkers may be seen as in a glass, and I cannot refrain from taking an occasion so opportune for bringing it out. In the first place then, instead of trying to explain the world by the evolution of some single principle, physical or metaphysical, as Hegel and Herbert Spencer do, he contents himself with referring it in the most general way to some Supreme Cause, without reference at all to the ways and means by which it is brought about, and which he regards as beyond the reach of the human faculties; or to the Final Ends or Causes for which things exist, which he feels to be useless for human purposes, comparing them in his beautiful way to those Vestal Virgins who 'barren of fruit were dedicated to God.' Then again, instead of analyzing the intellect into such shabby and pinchbeck categories as we have seen in Kant and Hegel, and then interpreting the world through them, as if you should break up the pure white light into its separate colours; and taking a few of them should insist on looking at the world through them, instead of this he seeks rather to clear the intellect of the illusions that come from the diffracting *media* of the emotions, and obscure its sight, those idols of the den, the theatre, and the market-place, as he calls them, so that it may accurately mirror and represent the world. Again, instead of exercising himself like the metaphysicians, as to whether love after all is not a form of lust, reverence of fear, justice of expediency, and the like, (as if one were to take one pole of a battery and insist that it must be after all only a form of the other pole,) he ignores the whole controversy as irrelevant, and boldly points out that look where you will throughout Nature and Human Life you will find provision made at once for the interests of the individual and the interests of the species, of the particular and the general, of man and of

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God, of the selfish and of the unselfish interests, of the private and of the public good. This broad division of all things into two opposite poles he calls their *private* and their *public* nature respectively, and it no more concerns him that he cannot get right or justice or elevation out of the individual by himself, than it does that he cannot get music out of half-a-dozen notes picked out of an oratorio, or a character out of a few actions cut out of a man's life, or cause and effect out of a single isolated sequence, or the like. On the contrary he sees that to get the harmonies of the world you must so focus your mind as to bring it to bear on what may be called a natural whole; and in this case the natural whole is not a man isolated, but man in society; so that if you cannot get justice or right out of men by themselves, you will get it out of them by the pressure put on them by their fellows either through force, law, or public opinion. It was by the massiveness, simplicity, and naturalness of generalizations like these, that he charmed me—these strokes that cut Nature down the middle and laid its method bare at a single sweep, as it were; instead of doing as the metaphysicians did, namely boring holes here and there into the mind, which they call the analysis of it but which close over again leaving you no wiser than before.

But while admiring the intellectual sweep which enabled him thus to overlook the whole field of thought, and to point out to men of science the way in which they must walk if their labours were to bear fruit in the discovery of truth, I was repelled rather than otherwise by the excess of worldly wisdom with which his essays abound. For although any deficiency in this is to be deprecated, still these essays of his on 'ceremonies,' on 'reputation,' on 'negotiating,' on 'simulation and dissimulation,' on 'envy,' on 'cunning,' on 'counsel,' on 'suspicion,' on 'suitors,' on 'ambition,' and the rest, these instructions to princes, nobles, and rulers—who alone were of consequence in his time—as to the manner in which they are to hold and conduct themselves for their own advancement in

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person or estate, or as to the wiles by which they are to overreach each other or aggrandize themselves at each others expense, or as to the best hand of cards to hold in these encounters and how best to play them. All this I must confess seemed to me to indicate a mind wanting in dignity and self-respect, and worthy rather of some foxy detective watching the rat-holes of life, than of a great and sovereign spirit.

It was at about the time of which I am writing, that owing to a controversy which had been started by Gladstone on the political influence of the 'Vatican Decrees,' then but recently promulgated, I was first led to the writings of Cardinal Newman who had taken up the challenge which Gladstone had thrown down. But nothing, indeed, could have been farther from my expectations at that time than that I should get any access of insight or intellectual help from a Theologian of any school, much less from a Theologian of the Catholic Church which I identified with the very spirit and genius of reaction itself. But I had not gone far in the perusal of his writings before I discovered that he too belonged to the sovereign race of Poetic Thinkers from whom stimulus and suggestion at least were always to be looked for, however much the conclusions of the author might differ from one's own. For in Newman I came unexpectedly on an intellect of the highest order,—subtlety, delicacy, penetration, clearness, comprehensiveness, serenity, knowledge of the world and of human life, being visible on every page,—and one, besides, occupying an intellectual point of view (as was to be expected from a thinker who had in middle life embraced a creed alien to his traditions) more commanding than the particular creed to which he had given his adhesion, though in this creed he found the best expression and embodiment of his ideal of life, and in the Church to which it was attached all that was best in him found for itself a home. Indeed he expressly tells us that it was by reason of certain large, general, intellectual

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views, which we shall see in the next chapter, that he was led to the Catholic Church as the institution which best met and harmonized with them. And if in the end I was actually less influenced by him in the particular conclusions at which I arrived than by the other great Poetic Thinkers whom I have passed in review, it was due rather to differences in what I have called 'the personal equation,' that is to say in original disposition and temperament, in moral and emotional affinity, than in intellectual affinity properly so called. For if with all my general sympathy with the Poetic Thinkers I was nevertheless repelled in points by peculiarities in them with which I was not (owing to this personal equation) in sympathy; in Carlyle, by what to me was his excess of puritanic morality, his querulousness and fault finding, and by his absence of form; in Emerson and Goethe, by their absence of vehemence, indignation, and fire; in Bacon, by his over worldliness and absence of personal pride; I was repelled still more in Newman by a piety, devoutness, and unworldliness with which I had no natural sympathy, a lack which far from extenuating, I desire to apologize for as a regrettable deficiency in my own nature, much as the absence of an ear for music would be, but which if Goethe's dictum that a man's philosophy is often the supplement of his character be true, must have made it impossible for us to unite in our moral estimates, in our estimates of the value of institutions, or indeed in the approval of almost any given course of action or conduct, however much we might agree from the most abstract and purely intellectual point of view.

With these preliminaries which I have entered into mainly with the view of giving the reader some hint of the personal bias, the 'personal equation' which I brought to the solution of the question of the Problem of Life, and which it is necessary to be in possession of if allowance is to be made for whatever in one's nature is calculated to deflect his mind from the pure dry light of truth, I am now in a position to return to the Poetic Thinkers just named, with the view of indicating in

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what particulars I was helped and supported by them in my search for the lost Ideal, and what under the new intellectual conditions thrown into the Problem by Darwin and Herbert Spencer, was left for me to do for myself if I was to recover again this Ideal from out of the intellectual confusion, the materialism, and the scepticism of the time.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE POETIC THINKERS.

ALTHOUGH the Philosophers whom we have just passed in review are in many ways so widely different, I have classed them all under the one head of Poetic Thinkers, inasmuch as they all agree in those particular modes of regarding the world, which as the outcome of our study of the Metaphysical Thinkers proper, we saw to be a necessity if the highest truth accessible to man in his present stage of development, is to be attained.

In the first place they one and all perceived the absurdity of attempting to explain either the World or the Human Mind by any principle or combination of principles, by any law or combination of laws which the human mind with its limited number of senses, has up to the present time discovered or is likely to discover, as, for example, the Persistence of Force and the laws of mechanical motion deducible from it, by which Spencer explains them, or the triple movement of Spirit (or the 'Notion') by which Hegel contends that all things have been evolved. Not that the natural man by himself,—a poor ephemeral and palpably intermediate product,—would have dreamed of the possibility of explaining this shoreless Universe from whose depths he has been cast up, and on which he swims, were it not for the intellectual inflation which has been produced in him by the discovery of the law of gravitation,

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a law which as being coextensive with the infinitely vast and superficial, flattered his poor intellect that the same or a like law might be made to explain the infinitely small as well; that because it had explained the movements of the mass, it might be made to explain the workings of the particle and of the utmost particle—quite a different matter. Indeed to imagine that a being like man, who but the day before yesterday emerged from the slime and yesterday from the kingdom of the brutes, should with an eternity before him in which to develop into a higher form of being with new and higher faculties superadded, possibly have drawn all the threads of Nature and Life to within the circuit of his own small brain, so as to anticipate what in all probability can only be known in its entirety to the intelligence developed at the *end* of the evolutionary process; to imagine this, I say, and then to go farther and aggressively declare as Spencer and Hegel do, that they have found the key to it all, is arrogance and presumption of spirit rather than intellectual insight and penetration. One would almost as soon believe that the problem of existence can be solved by manipulating and combining such principles as are open to the intelligence of the anthropoid apes, as that it can be solved by man at his present stage of development and culture.

The law of the evolution of spirit again (or of 'the Notion,' as I have elsewhere described it) which Hegel identifies with the evolution of the Universe both physical and spiritual, is at best only an evolution of the categories of the Logical Understanding, namely quantity, quality, cause and effect, organic unity, self-consciousness, and the like, not the categories of the Sentiments, Imagination, or Heart. For the problem of the World it must be remembered concerns not merely the abstract fact of quantity, but quantity of what? not of quality, but quality of what? not of self-consciousness, but self-consciousness of what? It is a problem not of the framework, but of the contents, not of the casket, but of the jewels, not of the

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form, but of the inner nature, not of the forces involved, but of their function, colour, and life. And it is evident that a law which professes to explain only the abstract categories of quantity, quality, relation, self-consciousness, and so on, cannot explain a difference which is part of the content of self-consciousness and which gets all its emphasis from self-consciousness, the difference namely which the soul makes between selfishness and unselfishness, between heroism and self-indulgence, between love and lust, between what is *high* and what is *low* in motive or intention. And yet the whole of life turns practically on these distinctions. Hegel's law can only assume them, it cannot explain them or deduce them from the other categories, and so is but an imperfect solution of the Problem of the World, getting any appearance of completeness it may have, by leaving out the Prince of Denmark in the Play of Hamlet.

Now the Poetic Thinkers have seen all this from the beginning, and have avoided it as a deadly pitfall. Bacon struck the key-note when he said that Nature was more subtle than the mind of man, by which he meant to convey that at no point of time can the scientific laws discovered by the human mind with its limited five senses, equal the subtlety and complexity of the web of Nature which it has taken countless ages of evolution to weave, and which these laws are called on to explain, but that in her last recesses Nature must for ever elude our search.

Goethe follows Bacon in this, and is constantly repeating that the origin and the original principles of all things are incomprehensible to us; and far from imagining that any one principle or law or method will *explain* the world, he confesses that if he is to find any harmony in it, he must occupy not one physical or metaphysical standpoint but several, must use not one method only but many, not one part of the mind, the understanding proper, but the imagination and heart as well. And hence he declares that while as a Scientist he is obliged to

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be a Materialist, as a Poet he must become a Pantheist, and as a Religious Thinker a Theist.

Carlyle, again, is never weary of denouncing those who imagine that they can fully explain the Universe by the few threads which up to now man has succeeded in drawing out from the great mesh or web of laws of which it is constituted; and contemptuously compares such thinkers to those minnows who while they have a very complete knowledge of the pebbles and the nooks of their little inland stream, can have no knowledge at all of the great ocean tides, the trade-winds and monsoons by which their little home is liable from time to time to be upset. For while admitting that a knowledge of the Physical Laws of Nature is of the utmost value in enabling us to control the world around us for our own use and comfort, and while admitting further that it is of even greater value in upsetting those superannuated superstitions and retrograde religious Cosmogonies which have hitherto been accepted as the explanation of things, he declares that when these physical laws are elevated into the sole instruments for explaining the mystery of existence, they become at once pernicious and even poisonous.

Emerson, too, is of the same opinion, and in order to escape from the limitations which our beggarly five senses impose on our understandings, and which restrict so greatly the number of the laws of Nature which we can possibly discover, as well as forbid us to understand the *nature* of the forces engaged, (in the same way as a dog seeing a man looking through a telescope, might understand his movements but not their motive), is constantly looking out for the appearance of some Seer or Mahatma as the Theosophists would say, who by the possession of some extra or additional sense or faculty, shall tell him the inner meaning and nature of it all.

Newman, too, is so strongly convinced of the impossibility of getting aught but blank Atheism out of the world by the exercise of our natural faculties when left to themselves, that he

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is obliged to fall back on Revelation to help him out. But instead of looking forward, as Emerson does, to the advent of some new prophet who by the possession of higher powers will be armed with the authority needful to show us the hidden powers and processes of Nature, he still thinks that all that is necessary for us to know beyond what our natural powers can teach us, can be had from the old revelation of the truth by Jesus Christ, as expounded by the Catholic Church and its Supreme Head.

Now although one and all of these Poetic Thinkers have thus resigned all hope of satisfactorily explaining the World by any principle or combination of principles which it is open to man in his present stage to discover, and so have cut themselves off entirely from the Materialistic and Metaphysical Schools; and although by doing so they have avoided the danger of ruining their representation of the World by cutting it down so as to make it fit these poor and imperfect principles. they nevertheless all agree that the visible and tangible world of Nature stands in some relation to an invisible world behind it, and that relation they conceive to be to *represent* or symbolize the Spiritual World which is its Cause; and so to teach us things of deepest import in reference to it.

Bacon, of course, appearing as he did before Modern Science had made serious inroads into those vitals of the faith which were bound up with the Mosaic Cosmogony, frankly accepted the prevailing view that the world and all it contains was made by God, and that the most essential part of what we ought to know was contained in Revelation. But that the world throughout was the manifestation of Spiritual Power generally, was otherwise evidenced to him by the fact that as the multiplicity of the world is traced back further and further, things disclose behind their *physical* unlikenesses *spiritual* affinities which the finer eye of the Poetic Thinker detects, and which cause things that have no outer resemblance that Physical Science can take hold of, to leave an identical

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impression on the mind; thus proving to him that physical and material things must have their source and origin in the unity of some Invisible and Spiritual Power.

Goethe, again, was so saturated with the conception of the spiritual nature of things, that he wrote the 'Elective Affinities' to show that the attractions and repulsions of the chemical elements are paralleled and reproduced for self-conscious beings in the attractions and repulsions of the sexes; thus showing how Nature speaks to us as one spirit to another, the great Poets and Poetic Thinkers acting as interpreters, and catching her meaning without the medium of language.

As for Carlyle again, his 'Sartor' is one long illustration of the truth that all visible, material things exist to express and represent spiritual realities, and like the uniforms of soldiers and policemen, the robes of magistrates and judges, and the flags of the nations, stand for ideas, and are as much their expression as language itself could be, in the same way as our bodies are the clothing of our minds, and with their movements and gestures exist to represent us to each other and to express our thoughts and feelings. The material and visible, that is to say, exists to represent the spiritual and give it expression. He recognizes of course as clearly as the Materialist that this clothing or vesture which we call Nature and Man, can doubtless be accounted for by scientific laws, did we only know them, but like Bacon he still contends that no merely human faculty is equal to the full or complete inventory of these laws. It is enough, he thinks, that these scientific laws should be sought for the practical purposes of life, for health, for digestion, for locomotion, for comfort, for food, for everything in short except, as we have said, for the Mystery of Existence, to which they are unequal and for which there is nothing for mortals but reverence and wonder. And it is because he regards our present knowledge of these laws, and our little lives lived in accordance with them, as but a little bright sun-lit isle of light swimming on an infinite unsounded sea of mystery, that he feels

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that the utmost man can do is to try and paint or represent some small section of Nature or History, but by no means to imagine that he has fully explained it. And hence it was that he himself, great philosopher as he was or might have become, dedicated his life to giving us Rembrandt-like pictures of the world and of human beings here and there, histories, biographies, and so on, but not a systematic Philosophy aiming at a full explanation either of the External World, of Man, of Society, or of the Human Mind; while the dark background of mystery behind and beyond it all, his Puritanic temper led him to represent as a background of gloom, not to be penetrated, but to be referred to vaguely and with awe-stricken solemnity as the region of 'the Immensities and the Eternities.'

With Emerson, too, as with the rest of the Poetic Thinkers, the visible world is the clothing, garment, mirror and outward expression of the invisible world of Spirit, or say rather its very life, as the leaves and blossoms of a tree are the outward expression of its life, and exists not merely to feed and clothe us but to discipline and teach us what we are to think and believe, do or avoid. It is there to give us the images which in turn give us the language by which we teach one another; and to show us, as Goethe says first love does, that there is Beauty at the heart of things; as well as to teach us by its reactions and compensations that it is bi-polar and double-edged, and so that the Soul of the World is just. And finally Nature, by the way in which she responds to our moods and takes their hue and impress, teaches us that we all have precisely the world that corresponds to our own souls, and that as we drink deeper of the divine springs she herself will appear more beautiful and ennobled, until at last should we ever again come to the primitive state of purity and innocence fabled of man before the Fall, the evil we now see will disappear, and to our hypnotized eyes and soul all will seem 'very good;' the snakes, the spiders, and beetles which now repel us will seem to us when we are no longer afraid of their bites or stings, as

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they did to the First Man, or as they tend to do now to the eye of the entranced physiologist, beautiful adaptations merely, and not evil at all. And hence he concludes that all we have to do to make for ourselves a Heaven here, is to purify our own souls. And in this way he anticipates the man that is to be, and expresses not what was true of Adam in Paradise, but what shall be true of our descendants in remote ages of evolution.

Newman, too, holds by the same general ideas and lives in the same great thought; but Christian Theologian as he is, he gives the facts an altogether different complexion. In his 'Apologia' he tells us he carried about with him habitually the impression that men and things as we see them around us, were but half real, that they were but spirits walking, the symbols and incarnation of spiritual realities and verities; not however of the powers of Good, but as in bondage to the powers of Evil; that they seemed veiled and weeping as if bemoaning their lost Eden and bewailing the Fall, and as if awaiting another incarnation of the Good to restore to them their innocence and purity again. Coming to Nature not as Emerson did from the Greek standpoint of a joyous and unsuspicious innocence and purity, but from the Hebraic conception of disobedience, all things seemed to him to speak of Sin and of the necessity of another incarnation, of another Spirit made flesh, who should bring forgiveness and reconciliation with him; thus supporting Emerson in his doctrine that we make our own world of Nature and Life, according to the bias and complexion of our own souls.

Now not only did these Poetic Thinkers all avoid the first great error into which we have seen the Materialists and Metaphysicians have fallen,—namely of attempting to *explain* the Universe of Mind and Matter—by keeping to the safe ground of showing that the one was the *expression* of the other; but as a consequence of this they were enabled to avoid the second great error of these Materialists and Metaphysicians,

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namely of making out of the few principles by which they professed to explain the World, an artificial eye, and then bringing this to the observation and explanation of individual things; in this way seeing all things falsely and out of focus, perspective, and proportion. Instead of doing this the Poetic Thinkers, on the contrary, have regarded *the Mind as an organized whole* as the natural eye through which alone things can be seen in their true bearings, and have used the separate faculties of the mind as instruments merely.

Bacon, we saw concerning himself (before making his observations on Life and Nature) rather with clearing the natural intellectual eye to keep it free from fog and illusion, than with attempting to replace it by any artificial eye whatever, of what principles soever composed; and Goethe never for a moment neglects to keep separate intellectual instruments of truth; using, as we have seen, the understanding for purely scientific purposes, the sympathies and sensibilities for poetic and religious, and the mind as a whole for co-ordinating them all and giving them their true bearings and relations.

So, too, Carlyle in the 'Sartor' is constantly reiterating in one form or another that to look at the World with the view of interpreting it through the laws of Physical Science only, is like looking at it through a pair of spectacles behind which there is no eye; and compares such an instrument to the Doctor's head in the Arabian tale, which if set in a basin to keep it alive would answer quite as well and would go on grinding out such laws for ever, without the shadow of a heart.

Emerson, too, is firm on the same point. He insists that the World as a whole cannot be properly explained by any addition or subtraction or combination of Physical or Psychological laws, as particular things or processes like the phenomena of digestion or of a disease of the brain can be; but only by bringing the whole mind, as it were, with all its special powers and faculties in free and vigorous exercise, full

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on every point; as one can only get the relative bearings of objects in the landscape by bringing to each and every point of it the complex unity of the organized human eye.

. Newman, again, in his 'Grammar of Assent,' it may be remembered, makes the mind as an organic whole, with its sentiments, intuitions and all, compacted into a unity, his organon for the discovery of truth, under the name of the 'Illative Sense.' But his error lay, I think, in his carrying this organon which was so true for the world as a whole, into those special problems of life and society where purely scientific methods and instruments are alone in place, or where in the event of a conflict of evidence, the decision should rest with them; the difference in this respect between him and the Scientific Materialists being that whereas they fell into error by using an instrument suitable only for special departments of research, for the problem of the world as a whole, he used an instrument proper to the problem of the world as a whole, for the solution of problems falling under special departments of Physical Science and Psychology. And indeed if we consider it well, to employ anything less than the whole human mind in the interpretation of the world as a whole, would be to stultify the entire ground-plan of Evolution which proceeds on the assumption that the organ or instrument which it has taken ages to evolve, is the fittest organ or instrument for the work which it has to perform. It would be as absurd to expect to get a harmonious view of the World as a whole by cutting off any power, function, or faculty of the organized human mind, as it would be to expect to get a harmonious and all-round impression of an external object by cutting off the evidence of one or more of the senses.

Now the consequence of this use by the Poetic Thinkers of the mind as an organic whole in all their studies of Life and Nature, was such a number of profound observations of the world and of life as is not to be matched in the writings of any other body of men, and as you would in vain look for in the

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writings of the Theologians, the Metaphysicians, the Materialists, or the Psychologists. The works of these Poetic Thinkers one and all are distinguished for this wisdom of life, this insight into human nature and motive, this knowledge of the ways of men, this prophetic insight into the drift and trend of events; Bacon and Goethe proverbially so; Emerson and Carlyle scarcely less so; while none understands better than the Theologian Newman, the motives and principles of action of the men of the world and politicians, or the points of view of the average sensuous man of the market and the street; or has better characterized and described them.

It is only when we come to the practical problem of what we are to do and to whom or what we are to look for guidance in this world, that we find these Poetic Thinkers differing widely among themselves. They all agree, as we have seen, that the world of Nature and of Human Life exists for our guidance, is here to represent a spiritual Reality, and to teach us what we are to do and to believe. But the world of Nature and of Human Life is a large and varied area from which to make choice of our counsellors and guides; and it is mainly on differences in temper and personal bias, that the differences of choice in this respect among these thinkers will be found to depend.

Bacon, of course, accepted Revelation pure and simple as his guide for the higher things of the spirit; trusting to knowledge of the human mind (mainly on the shady side) for government, state-craft, and policy; and to the Physical Science of the future, for all progress in the arts and comforts of life.

Goethe here as elsewhere is the most many-sided and free from theory or personal bias of any kind, and uses with equal indifference every instrument that comes to his hand, for his great end of Culture—Science, Nature, Art, Books, Men, History and Biography, Action and Contemplation, Religion, Self-Renunciation, and the practice of a moderate and regulated Asceticism. It is only when we come to Carlyle, Emerson, and

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Newman, that the effects of special training, of personal bias, and of certain elements of theory, in restricting this equal and all-round sympathy of Goethe, are seen.

Carlyle's position is the logical outcome of a mixture of all three, of special theory, of a particular training, and of personal bias. To begin with he has a theory that Society, like the World in general, although always changing never advances. He sees that all things work together, and that the results of one generation are transmitted to the next by tradition, but he believes that like Nature, Society swings backwards and forwards in perpetual flux of ebb and flow of moral and spiritual activity, and swims like Nature herself, in an unknown direction over unknown seas of mystery and darkness. The consequence is that as he can find no definite line of tendency along which Society as a whole is advancing, which may furnish him with a guide to Action, he is obliged to fall back on individuals, and the question becomes on whom? To answer this he starts with the assumption that the great masses of men are incapable either of culture or morality, and if left to themselves without guidance, would soon relapse into barbarism; and accordingly he has to look out for appropriate leaders armed with the requisite power and authority. And on enquiring as to what the power is by which men are willingly led, he answers, by the power of their own imaginations, that is to say by what they imagine they see behind the outward and visible clothing of men, behind their personal appearance, their manners, their words, and their actions; and he concludes that as the words and deeds of Great Men have ever been the most calculated to impress and enchain the imaginations of men, (as indeed they may be said to be the best 'clothed' intellectually, morally, and physically) so it is but right and natural that the Great Men of each age or generation should be chosen as its guides, counsellors, law-givers, and leaders. Whether the Hero shall be military or political, prophet, priest, or philosopher, will, he thinks, be determined by the particular form which the Age

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most requires; and he gets over the difficulty that a multiplicity of heroes of variously different kinds may be required at one and the same time, by another theory on which he lays the greatest stress. It is that the intellectual, the spiritual, the moral, are all sides of one and the same power, and are interchangeable. Now this theory although perhaps true abstractly or in tendency, is not so in actual practical fact, and is in consequence a broken reed on which to lean in the affairs of life. But Carlyle, nothing daunted, pushes it home to its utmost conclusion and boldly declares that the Hero who is great in one direction is potentially so in all, that he can turn his hand to any kind of work if required, can be prophet, priest, philosopher, or king, according as the exigencies of the time demand. Hero-worship, accordingly, is his universal panacea for the necessities of each and every age. But when he goes on to consider practically in what form among so many, his hero shall appear, his personal bias begins to show itself. Holding as he very justly did, that without morality society cannot hold together at all, the excess of emphasis which his Puritan temper laid on religion and morals, caused him to lop off from the all-round requisites which Goethe demanded in his fully-equipped man, most of the scientific, and practically all the artistic and æsthetic culture, and to restrict the equipments of his Hero to two mainly, namely Religion and Action. The Hero, accordingly, in his capacity at once of Prophet and King was the leader who in the eyes of Carlyle was required for the necessities of society not only in our own but in all times.

Emerson, on the contrary, can scarcely be said to have restricted on any side the sympathy and tolerance of his mind, which was as many-sided almost as that of Goethe; but even he had his theory which derogated from his general influence although not interfering, as we have seen, with his practical penetration. Agreeing, as he does, with Carlyle that the world of visible Nature exists as the representative and exponent of

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the Deity, he denies that any one species of excellence, even the Great Man himself, is worthy to constitute itself His representative, but believes that as it takes the whole landscape to give us the poetry, so it takes the whole of society to give us the excellence which our ideal demands. He declares that each individual has his peculiar quality of excellence which is inalienable and not to be appropriated by another; that each man has something to learn from all, and all from each; and that in consequence, as the welfare of society consists not in the aggrandizement of one person but in a general excellence, each man should rely on himself, and make the most of his own particular gift, humbly submitting himself for the result to the Divine Will. And lastly, as each, in his theory, lies open, as we have seen, on one or other of his sides to the whole mind of God, as the waters of a bay do to the ocean, so in the last resort he can fall back on that Divine mind and be fed by it as from an inexhaustible fountain, without other extraneous aid; neither Hero, nor Church, nor Society, being necessary to him, but only that Divine Voice with which he is ever in communication, and from which if he listens in all humility, he will hear the right word.

With Newman, too, as with the other Poetic Thinkers, the visible world of Nature and of Life exists as the representative and exponent of Spiritual Realities, but participating, as it does, in Adam's Fall, it stands there as the representative and embodiment of Evil rather than of Good. Instead, therefore, of Nature and Life being our teachers and guides as to what we are to do and to follow, they are witnesses rather of our guilt, and warnings as to what we are to avoid. Since the Fall, and until the advent of Jesus Christ, God had, he thinks, with the exception of certain Prophets sent for special purposes, no visible representatives of Himself in the world of Nature or of Human Life. And since the Advent of Christ, no series of merely Great Men appearing from age to age were to be recognized as our guides, as with Carlyle; nor was the infinite

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unfathomed sea of Spirit to which our souls have access and on which they can draw at will, to be our monitor as with Emerson; but Jesus Christ alone. But as the life-in-the-flesh of Jesus as of other mortals, was but a transient phenomenon, it is evident, says Newman, that if His teaching and influence were to be enduring he must leave behind him some visible representative of Himself. Not a mere Book, for that must either be so literal and inelastic as to be useless as a guide for any age but that for which it was written, or so spiritual and elastic as to be able to support any doctrine or course of conduct that is found to bring spiritual comfort to the soul; nor yet a series of isolated men in every place and time grounding themselves on the Book, for owing to the infinite diversity of temperament, personal bias, or spiritual affinity, they would soon be found to split themselves into infinite differences of opinion as to what the Book required under every fresh combination of circumstances that arose, were it not, indeed, that the simple Cross of Christ and the tendency men have to go in groups, were constantly knitting them together again. But the simple Cross of Christ is of use only for the temper of mind it produces and for the comfort it brings to the private heart, not for guidance and direction in the complex and ever-varying situations of practical life. And for this, besides the Civil Power, nothing less than some Institution founded on the life and teaching of Jesus, armed with his authority, and made infallible by the direct and constant communication of his Spirit, could avail—an Institution in which the transient individual, however great, is absorbed and lost, and that abides while all else decays, an Institution that is sacred through and through, and that like the hem of Christ's garment, radiates the grace originally communicated to it by its Founder, not merely from its priests, its martyrs, and its saints, but from the meanest utensils consecrated in its service.

Such an Institution did Newman with his personal piety, his Hebraic temper (deeply conscious as he was of sin and of the

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need of reconciliation and forgiveness), demand for the satisfaction of his nature; and believing, as he did, that material and visible things were not only the *symbols* and expression of Divine things, but that they were the *instruments* of communicating them as well, so that images and relics and all else to which grace had been communicated by contact, could by contact communicate it in turn to others in faith; he found that a consensus of probabilities sufficient for certitude pointed to the Catholic Church with its sacraments, its hierarchies, its mysteries, as his true guide, and which after long and weary wandering brought him to his home at last.

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CHAPTER X.

MY CONTRIBUTION.

BUT in spite of my agreement in method and point of view with these Poetic Thinkers, these master-spirits of the Modern World, who represented each in his way the height not only of the mental power but of the culture of his time, there was no one of them whose practical solution of the World-problem precisely met the particular difficulties with which I was confronted. From the time of my reading of the Metaphysical Thinkers I saw that although the faculties of man were equal to all the problems of practical life that were likely to arise from his situation and environment, it was hopeless to attempt to explain either the World or the Human Mind by any law or combination of laws open to him in his present stage of development, with his limited number of special senses and a range of mentality which unless all evolution is at fault, can only be on the way to higher stages of thought and existence. I saw, too, the absurdity of making an intellectual eye of these few laws, and then insisting on reading the history of Man and Nature through the eye so made, as was done by Darwin, Spencer, and Hegel, although at the same time I fully admitted the value of the widest generalizations as preliminary hypotheses for suggestion, for the opening up of new fields of research, and for bringing as wide a tract of territory as possible under the dominion of natural law; and I could only conclude that

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the mind as an organized whole, using its separate parts as instruments for special purposes, was the one true Organon or method for a just insight into the World as a whole. And lastly, I saw that although you could neither explain Mind by the movements of Matter, as Spencer attempted to do, nor Matter by the movements of Mind or Spirit, as Hegel did, you could as a matter of fact indicate the relation existing between the two; and that you were on the safe ground of observed fact in declaring with the Poetic Thinkers, that Spirit or Mind is primary, and that (on any hypothesis as to *how* they were specially connected) Matter and all visible and tangible things exist to *represent* these spiritual things and to body them forth, for our instruction, guidance, and discipline.

But agreeing, as I did, with the Poetic Thinkers in their great general principles, I found myself, as I have said, unable to accept their practical solutions of the Problem of the World, owing mainly to two great difficulties. In the first place, like the Metaphysicians they all, with the exception, perhaps, of Goethe, represent the mind as an entity existing apart from and independent of the mechanism of the brain and nervous system, thus ignoring a doctrine which has been growing in favour, indeed, for the last hundred years, but which has only been put on a scientific basis since their time, chiefly through the works of Spencer and the Physiologists and Psychologists. Bacon and Newman, as Christian Thinkers, accepted as was natural, the doctrine of the separate and independent existence of a soul apart from the body; so too, did Carlyle and Emerson; Carlyle regarding the body, in the 'Sartor,' as a garment of which the mind could as easily divest itself, as the body itself can of its clothes; while Emerson so scouts the idea of the state of the brain being any bar to thought, that he figures man, as we have seen, as having an inlet to a Universal Soul on which he can draw at will; thought and emotion depending not on the condition, state, or quality of the brain, but on the height to which this Universal Soul rises in the individual, as the

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mercury rises in a thermometer. With an ocean of soul on which to draw, it is comparatively easy to find the ideal, whether it be of God or Immortality; indeed by taking a sufficient draught of it you can, as we saw Emerson doing, get rid of Evil altogether.

If the Poetic Thinkers had thus like the Metaphysicians an easy task in finding their Ideal in the mind, by ignoring the main difficulty with which I was confronted, namely the dependence of mental phenomena on physical and material conditions of the brain and nervous system, they failed me altogether in my main desire which was to find the Ideal in the world. For they one and all regarded the world as constantly *changing*, indeed, but not *advancing*, as changing its vices from age to age rather than making steady progress in virtue and morality. From which it followed that as Evil had always been in the world to cast doubt on the existence and reality of the Ideal, so it always would continue to be; and I saw that unless I could show that the world was continually advancing, continually throwing off its own evils and impurities, and that things were slowly but surely ascending towards the heights where the Ideal reigned,—towards Justice, Beauty, Goodness and Truth,—there would be in the absence of a future state of perfection and bliss, no chance of finding the Ideal either in this world or the next, and no reason for believing that there was a Divine Mind behind things at all. And if there were no Ideal in the world, then I saw that the Goethe-Carlyle solution of the Problem of Life by Self-renunciation, was good only for those persons who wanted to know how they could be blessed while living in this world, of which they had to make the best as of a bad bargain, but not for me or for those like me whose main concern was whether there were anywhere in this world or another, any Ideal in whose service or in the contemplation of whose excellences life could be made worth living at all.

Accordingly when I took up the problem on my own

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account, and under the new conditions imposed on it by the Materialists and Psychologists, I had to find the Ideal anew both in the mind and in the world. I had to find it, not as the Poetic Thinkers and Metaphysicians had done in a mind existing independently of external conditions, but in a mind chained to and dependent on the material organization of the brain and nervous system, that is to say on Matter, in which no Ideal can be found. Not only so, but I had to find it in a mind in which not only the old stand-bye of Conscience or the Moral Sense, but Reverence and Love also had been reduced by the Metaphysicians and Psychologists into forms of self-interest or selfishness merely, variously disguised.

Now to find the Ideal in a mind which on the one hand was but a function of Matter, and on the other, if the Psychologists were right, was but a subtle and complex organ for the furtherance of self-interest, or at most of race interests merely, I saw that several things were necessary. In the first place I saw that I should have to find something *in* the mind that was not *of* the mind, if one may say so; in the second place, that I should have to find something that was not an organ, or faculty, or sentiment, but that gave to the organs, faculties, and sentiments their fixed relative positions and ranking; and lastly, something that was not, like the moral sense, decomposable into the form of some other function or faculty, but that remained ever itself and unchangeable. What I wanted, in a word, was something that would answer in a way to the Judge in a court of law, who although in the court is, as it were, not of it, but is the representative of a Power distinct from each or all the parties to the suit; or, again, to a King who confers on his subjects their respective ranks as nobles, plebians, and the like; or to a Light which proves its presence by casting shadows from all objects not of the same nature as itself.

Now that there is something *in* the mind that is not a faculty or organ of the mind, was manifest to me from this,

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that these organs and faculties and sentiments have a fixed *ranking* among themselves, some of them being classed as low, others as high. A miscellaneous collection of faculties or powers could no more rank themselves without reference to something *outside* themselves, than men can make themselves into a hierarchy without reference to some outside standard. That this something was not *of* the mind was manifest too from this, that while the different organs of the mind have different estimates put on them by different people or at different times, conscience, for example, being at one time or by one class of thinkers regarded as a finger pointing to the Divine, at another time or by another class, as a mere form of expediency or self-interest; it, the something of which I speak, abides as an unchanging standard to which appeal is made, and which while judging all, is itself judged by none; in the same way as the standard against which boys measure themselves and which determines their respective heights, remains fixed and unchanging in spite of all dispute. And lastly, that there is something *in* the mind, which is not *of* the mind seemed clear to me from the fact that while in animals all the functions and faculties are exercised without reproach or shame, in man all the lower appetites and passions and all that is ignoble or base casts a shadow either of remorse, or shame, or reproach, thus proving that a light has been introduced among them from without; the fact that some of the higher animals exhibit the same phenomena although in a less degree, being only what we should expect since the doctrine of Evolution has shown us that there is no such chasm between man and the animal as was once supposed.

Now this something which is *in* the mind but not *of* it; which is not a faculty but a judge of the faculties; which is not conscience, honour, beauty, reverence, or love, but which gives them all their credentials; which casts shadows from all that is dark and low in motive or sentiment, but none from what is high; which has authority over all and gives rank to all; which

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approves or censures;—this something which like the pole star is fixed and abiding while all else changes or is dissolved, this is the Ideal in the mind, of which I was in search. It mattered not whether it were the Divine itself in the mind, or only its representative; whether it were immaterial like spirit, or had a material organ as its seat, which would decay and die like the rest of the individual; any more than it matters that a Judge is a man like those whom he judges, or that a King has a house in which he dwells, as his subjects have. Nor did it make any difference in the essential point, whether as sole sovereign like an Emperor it imposed its authority on its subject faculties against their will, or like the President of a democratic State it was itself elected by a committee chosen from among themselves; in either case it represented and implied a fixed standard of excellence *outside* themselves, by which all alike were to be bound. And if that standard, (as is alleged of one of the organs of the Ideal, namely the conscience or moral sense), is there only as the representative of the interests of the family, or clan, or race, or nation as against the interests of the individual, as the organs of generation represent the interests of the species as against those of the individual, in the body; this only shifts the Ideal from its position in the mind to a similar position in the world at large. For observe, it still stands as arbiter and judge between family and family, clan and clan, nation and nation; acquitting and condemning, and casting its shadow athwart all in their relations that is base and dishonourable, as it has already done between individuals, and as indeed it must continue to do until the whole world is conformed to its image and to its law. For although circumstances make it more difficult for nations to be magnanimous and honourable, generous and just in their relations with each other than is the case with individuals, still these virtues are none the less applauded and revered when circumstances make it possible for them to be shown between nations, than when they are shown between individuals and

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this must continue, as we have seen, until among the nations as among individuals, justice flows like a river and mercy like a running stream. And what is this but to have thrown back the Ideal from the individual mind on to the world at large, where after all it is of most importance that it should be found. But as my conviction is that it is primarily the representative in the mind of the Divine, and not like the conscience a mere organ of the mind which represents (according to the Materialists), the interests of the race, I shall have a different series of proofs for its existence in the world, which we shall consider further on.

In the meantime when I came on this Ideal in the mind I felt I had struck on a vein of purest gold that could neither be depreciated nor undermined,—whether limited in its manifestations, as I believed, by the quality and condition of the brain through which it acted; whether virtue and honour were but forms of subtly disguised selfishness; or whether conscience were a quality bred out of the necessity under which clans and races and nations lie of protecting themselves in the struggle for existence; and in my first published work, a pamphlet entitled 'God or Force?' the fortunes of which we shall see in the next chapter, I called it for want of a better title 'The Scale in the Mind.' It was the representative of the Divine standing in the mind and shining there, casting a shadow on all that was low, ignoble, or base in thought or feeling, and judging men not so much from their actions as from the motives and aims by which they are prompted. To quote from the pamphlet I have mentioned—

> 'This is the deepest fact in the human consciousness, standing at the back of all our thoughts, feelings, and impulses, and giving them their relative dignities. It will be best described, perhaps, by indicating the part it plays in our intelligence which is built up and organized around it like crystals. The havoc that would be made of all our ideas if it were cut out of the mind, attests its importance. Properly speaking, it is not a faculty, but is rather the measure of the faculties, giving them their relative subordinations. By it Justice, Goodness, Truth, and Beauty are marked

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high; while the physical sensations, appetites, and passions are marked *low*. All persons and institutions take their ranking from it, and the hierarchy in the world and in society is but a better or worse reflection of this hierarchy in the mind, and without it would fall into chaos. It is perhaps the most important distinction between man and the lower creation. Animals have no scale. With them, nothing is either high or low, noble or base. They follow all their instincts indifferently, without compunction and without choice. By the Scale, too, we get the idea of *quality* as distinguished from *quantity*. Hence a spark of high virtue outweighs mountains of utility. The Materialists attempt to show that unselfishness springs from selfishness, that reverence and conscience spring from fear, and that beauty springs from an aggregate of low pleasurable associations. But these respective attributes as they range themselves along the Scale are seen to be as different in their *essential* natures as a beautiful flower is different from the unsightly root out of which it grows. It is the Scale alone that puts the immense interval between force of mind and force of gravitation; and without it, God and Force were one. It forever repudiates the boasted victory of Science over Religion by announcing that the essential truths of each lie on different planes. By it we are forced to believe that the First Cause of things is not only more powerful, but also *higher* than ourselves. By it we are made to feel that Pleasure is only a *means*, but that elevation in the scale of Being is the *end* of human existence. It has been remarked by Carlyle that there is nothing so interesting to Man as Man, as is proved by the large element of *personality* that enters into nearly all conversation. I might add that in conversation respecting persons, there is nothing so interesting as this ranking of men and their procedure, as good, bad, indifferent, and the like. The greater number of adjectives, perhaps, in every language reflect in one form or another the Scale in the mind. They express different shades of quality and attribute, in positive, comparative, and superlative degrees.'

And then I proceed to show how from the neglect of this Scale, Modern Scientific Materialism is convicted of inadequacy to solve the World-Problem. 'It professes,' I go on to say:—

'to account for the phenomena of life, mental as well as physical, by physical laws alone; that is to say by the knowledge which is derived through the Outer Senses. But to the Senses there is no Scale. To the Senses there can be no difference in dignity between the motions of the matter which forms a crystal, and the motions of the nervous fluid which forms a thought. To the Senses there can be no difference in nature between the motions of the brain which correspond to a feeling of magnanimity and self-sacrifice,

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and the motions which correspond to a feeling of self-love and selfishness. The Materialist therefore cannot assume the Scale. If he does assume it, it is only by abdicating his own standpoint and working out his theories by the help of an intuition which he professes to discard. If he does not assume it, he is committed to endless absurdities. For without it he cannot show that man is superior to the vegetable; that self-sacrifice is higher than selfishness; duty than dishonesty; reverence than fear. Mr. Spencer the most wary and far-sighted of the Materialists, when he is consistent with himself ignores the Scale, and we shall now see what it reduces him to. He gravely asks us to consider whether, after all, there is much to choose between the force of *mind* and the force of heat! Mind, he is willing to admit, can do some things which heat cannot. For example it can invent a sun-glass and bring the rays of the sun to a focus. But heat, in other respects, has the advantage over mind, inasmuch as it can melt the diamond which is placed within that focus! This topsy-turvydom of all human categories comes of ignoring the Scale. But when the absurdities to which his philosophy reduces him begin to thicken around him, he is forced illegitimately to *assume* the Scale. He then tells us that Life is *high* in proportion to the complexity and extent of an animal's relations. For this reason a man is higher than a beaver, a beaver than a polyp. But unless the Scale is assumed, why should the more complex organization be *higher* than the simple? Why not the simple be higher than the complex? If he reply that the more complex can fulfil a greater number of ends than the simple, we have still to ask why that should constitute it a *higher* thing; unless indeed the *ends* are higher; and that would still involve our assuming the Scale. Indeed, except by assuming the Scale, it would be impossible to show the superiority of Mind over the clod of Matter on which we tread.'

And I continue—

'Again, as Materialism cannot *assume* the Scale, neither can it account for it. It may point out the relation that exists between the nervous structure of the brain and our thoughts and feelings. It may argue that difference in structure necessitates difference in function. But although in this way it may account for *differences* in our feelings, it is impossible to account for the fixed *ranking* of them. It cannot be accounted for on any Experience or Evolution hypothesis. The Poetic Thinkers who accept the *whole human Consciousness* as their standpoint, can, of course, consistently assume the Scale. But nowhere, as far as I am aware, have they brought it into the foreground, and used it as I have done, as a philosophical weapon.'

If for the Scale in the Mind in the above extracts we read

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the Ideal, the considerations I have just advanced in its support would be practically the same as I would urge to-day. It was my first contribution to the question, put forward for the consideration of the more advanced Thinkers of the School of Materialism to which on one side of my philosophy I belonged.

My second contribution was to show that even if it were true, as I believed, that the manifestations of Mind were limited by the condition and quality of the brain and nervous system, still Physical Science and the laws it discovered were not the true standpoint for the interpretation of the Problem of the World. And to show this I began by backing up the contention of Goethe, namely that different mental problems require different mental instruments for their solution, by the following argument in the same pamphlet :—

> 'Although the faculties of the mind, like the organs of the body, are mutually interdependent and form an organic unity; like the organs of the body too they have each their own special and appropriate functions. The Senses, for example, apprize us of the vicinity of objects that are to be sought or avoided, that are beneficial or injurious to us. The Understanding or generalizing faculty of the mind shows us the order and connexion of these objects, and shapes and adjusts them to our necessities and use. The Inner Spiritual Senses find their sphere in the world of beauty, beneficence, and omnipresent Power around us and pay homage to these in worship, art, and self-renunciation. The Spiritual Senses cease their function when they have supplied us with the raw material of knowledge; the Understanding when it has given order and connexion to this material; to the Inner Spiritual Senses alone is the Soul that works through and behind all things, disclosed. We have many hints given us that these different instruments of knowledge are limited in their range, and soon discover that any mistake in their application is punished by confusion of thought. The eyes are adapted only to a *limited* range of vision; the touch to a limited degree of fineness. When the mind (basing its judgments on experience) passes the finite, it becomes self-contradictory, and can neither conceive of Space without end, nor of an end to Space. The beauty that is apparent to the naked eye vanishes under the microscope, and the landscape pleases only when seen from a distance where ugly details are lost to view.' . . . .
> 'The secret of harmonious insight lies in knowing, as Bacon says,

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when to contract the sight and when to dilate it. To discover the Physical and Organic Laws of Nature, the naked Senses alone do not suffice. We have to arm them with instruments which like the microscope increase their power and delicacy. But we must drop these instruments when we come to investigate the broad relations that exist between one object and another, or between the different parts of the same object. The function of the biceps muscle, for example, is as clearly to flex the fore-arm, as the function of the eye is to enable us to see. But it is evident that if we were to decompose the muscle into the innumerable cells and fibres which go to form it, and apply the microscope to each of them in turn, we never could understand its function at all. In the same way, to see the harmony of the World as a whole, we must take the higher faculties as our point of interpretation. While in Physical Science we take our stand on the Outer Senses, and use the microscope as an instrument of research, in World-insight we take our stand on the Spiritual Senses and use the Outer Senses as instruments of research. Physical Science by itself can never see the harmony or the unity of the World. Its generalizations are based on a *likeness* which is palpable to the Senses. But the World is made up of phenomena between many of which there is no such likeness; as, for example, between a strain of music, a beautiful flower, and a poem. It is only when we take our stand on the higher faculties and intuitions that the subtle spiritual affinities which unite these unlike phenomena become apparent. It was the perception of these affinities that gave Bacon that breadth and vastness of understanding for which he is so justly renowned. For Analogy, which is the weakest and least significant of logical or scientific relations, is the most powerful of spiritual ones. There is variety at the circumference of the World, unity at the centre. To the Outer Senses all things are more or less unlike, less so to the Understanding or generalizing faculty which shows laws running through them, until to the Inner Spiritual Senses there is unity or sameness of impression. The truth is, insight into the World is got in much the same way as insight into the minds and characters of men. For how could I understand a man's mind or character except by the reaction which his words or deeds leave on my own mind? Or indeed how could I know that he had what we call a mind at all, except in the same way? His conscious soul cannot be seen, or in any way be made palpable to the senses, and yet it can be so manifested to me as to compel my *belief* in it. The *belief* in God comes in the same way, by the reaction of Nature on the mind. As the physical man is the mask that hides and yet reveals his spirit, so does Nature hide, yet reveal, God. The impression that Nature makes on the mind has the *highest* reaction on the Scale within us. What more could a visible, palpable God have?

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> Scepticism can begin only when God is embodied in a material and sensuous form and degraded. Otherwise there is no room for Atheism.'

This was all very well as far as it went, but as time went on I felt I wanted something still more radical to complete the proof that the Problem of the World could not be solved from the standpoint of Physical Science alone, and accordingly some years later I returned to the charge in another connexion in my book 'Civilization and Progress,' in a chapter entitled 'First Principles;' and to make my final position on this matter more complete, I may, perhaps, as well set it down here. I was engaged in the attempt to refute a doctrine of Comte's, namely that there is no need to *believe* in the Deity, because he cannot be *known* by Science, and in order to get this doctrine at an angle at which it could be successfully met, I was obliged to lay down at the outset that for human beings as at present constituted, Truth could be only what will *harmonize* with their mental constitution and with all other truths held by them. I then went on to show that many of the fundamental truths on which our ordinary intelligence rests, although they must be *believed* cannot be *known* by Physical Science, and then enumerated the following six as instances:—

'1. The belief in the existence of a World *outside* ourselves.
2. The belief in the existence of *mind* in our fellow-men.
3. The belief in the superiority of mind to matter, of heroism to self-indulgence, and so on.
4. The belief in the *persistence* of Force.
5. The belief in the *co-existence* of attractive and repulsive forces.
6. The belief in scientific *Causation*.'

The first three after what we have already said will be quite evident. The Outer World could not be *known* to exist by the methods of Physical Science, because all we scientifically know about it is certain affections of our senses, that is to say something *inside* of ourselves not *outside*. Nor can the

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existence of mind in our fellow-men; for that never could be discovered by the Senses, or demonstrated by any instrument of physical research whatever. Nor yet the Scale in the Mind, or the Ideal; for the parts of the brain that give rise to a *high* motive or sentiment cannot possibly have any difference in dignity from those that give rise to a *low* one so far as Physical Science goes; and yet all conversation, all literature, all our categories of judgment of men and things, assume this difference in rank and quality between one motive, action, or sentiment, and another. But to make my demonstration complete I still had to show that the very laws of Nature themselves which Physical Science had discovered, depended for their proof on something which Physical Science could not prove but had to *assume;* and that that something got all its validity from a *belief* of the mind; and therefore that Physical Science could by no possibility explain that human mind which, by the hypothesis, gives it its credentials. For the Laws of Nature with which Physical Science deals, depend for the proof of their truth on the fact that the quantity of force in the Universe is fixed. For as Spencer says, 'if the amount of force in the Universe varied, there could be no certainty that the scales and other instruments by which you test the truth of your scientific conclusions, might not vary from moment to moment, and so render all Science impossible.' In other words, Physical Science itself rests on a *belief* of the mind, the belief namely, that the amount of Force in the Universe is fixed,—a belief which Science cannot *prove*, because it is the basis of all scientific proof. There is no logical alternative therefore, but either to throw overboard all Physical Science as unproven, or else to admit that its truth depends on the mind, and that therefore it is an impertinence to attempt to explain the mind by it. But there was a still more striking instance of what must be *believed* although it cannot be *known* or *explained* by Physical Science, in the fact of the co-existence of attractive and repulsive forces; for it passes the human understanding to

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realize how one force can attract another while resisting it. Spencer himself admits this when he says 'We cannot truly represent one ultimate unit of Matter as drawing another while resisting it. Nevertheless the *belief* is one we are compelled to entertain.' It is the same, too, with Scientific Causation itself. When we see, for example, an effect represented let us say by the number four, we *believe* that two and two or three and one, or some other *equivalent* of four must have preceded it as its cause. If we did not we should be tacitly denying the persistence of force; and as the persistence (or fixity in amount) of force cannot be *explained* by Science, although it must be *believed*, so neither can the Law of Causation. And in summing up the whole argument I go on to say :—

> 'The above instances of the truth that much that cannot be *known* by Science must nevertheless be *believed*, are among the foundation stones on which the whole of our intelligence is built. To deny the truth of them would be to break up that little islet of *harmony* known as the Human Reason, and to decompose and shatter our organized intelligence to its base. To believe that there were no world outside of ourselves; that our fellow-men were automata without minds; that Matter was equal to or superior to Mind, and that the base and degrading things of the world were as high as the noble and self-sacrificing; that force was shifting and unsteady, so that we could not be sure that a pound to day would weigh a pound to morrow; that events could be sprung on us without a cause; to believe all this and to act on it, would indeed be to bring chaos into the World and madness into the mind.'

In this way I threw out Physical Science as the Organon or method for the solution of the Problem of Existence; thus supporting in detail what the Poetic Thinkers had always seen in a general way but had not fully demonstrated.

And so at last I had found the Ideal which I had lost, and of which I had been so long in search; had found it in the Mind, where neither the Psychologists nor the Physical Scientists could find it because by their methods and instruments it could not be brought within their field of observation. But the most important part of my task lay still before me,

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namely to find it in the World also. And here my old allies the Poetic Thinkers quite failed me. They all alike believed that although the world was changing, it was not advancing; Carlyle openly sneering at the 'progress of the Species,' and declaring that Society like Nature swam on a sea of darkness and mystery, swinging backwards and forwards in ebb and flow, now an age of faith and reality, now one of unbelief and imposture; Emerson believing that as man has always an inlet to the Universal Soul, there is no reason why he should be more moral in one age than in another, and openly declaring like Carlyle, that Society as a whole never advances; while Newman, like the rest of the theologians, believed that the elect are probably no greater in number in one generation than another, and that the flowering of the ideal will only take place in Heaven. But I felt that unless I could show that the Ideal existed in the present world and that provision was made for its progressive realization *here*, its mere existence in the mind would be but a mockery of our hopes, and the Goethe-Carlyle solution of the Problem of the World by the blessedness of self-renunciation, but an illusion and a dream. My first object, accordingly, was to get rid of Evil as a *positive* and permanent quality demanding some Evil Power as its natural explanation. This I attempted to do in a perfunctory way in my pamphlet 'God or Force?' but in more detail and on other lines in my chapter entitled 'Supernaturalism and Science,' in 'Civilization and Progress.' What I there endeavoured to show was that evil was merely an *instrument* or means of what I called the principle of Individuation; a necessary instrument if the world was to reach its goal through the play and interaction of *individual* things and not as a total entity, in the same way as the hand subserves its own purposes and functions by means of separate fingers and not as a single, individual stump. I urged that just as in animals the horns, hoofs, claws, fangs, stings and other organs of offence and defence are the *physical* means by which these

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animals are prevented from being absorbed into each other and run together into a general promiscuity, so in the mind what we know as evil, sin, envy, pride, jealousy, revenge, are really the same instruments transformed into more refined weapons, and carried to a higher plane. They are one and all means by which men defend themselves from being absorbed by each other, and by which the original ground-plan of Nature, namely Individuation, is preserved. Even lying, stealing, murder, adultery, and all those 'sins in the inmost members' which never come to outward action, are the same means but carried to *excess;* the proof that they have not the absolute quality of evil attaching to them being that Society has actually provided for their gratification within due limits, so that, as I wrote, 'if your sensual passions are strong, you can marry, not commit adultery; if your desire for money, for worldly goods and prosperities, is keen, you may work for them, not steal them or be covetous of the goods of others; if you have a high pride or ambition, a thirst for fame, you may attain them by good services done or by the laudable exercise of your talents, not by envy and detraction. If you wish to be equal with the man who has wronged you, you can appeal to the law, not to murder or private revenge. And thus it is that the very same thoughts, passions, and impulses which in *excess* have the special and positive quality of sin attached to them, and so would seem to require a Devil to explain them; when exercised in *moderation* have no such positive quality and require no such Deity.'

Having in this way got rid of Evil as an *absolute* essence inconsistent with the existence of the Ideal in the world, I had now to show that the great Laws and Tendencies of the world were all working slowly but surely for the final expulsion of evil as a blot on the fair face of this Ideal, so that in the end the Ideal should be all in all. I had to show that if the world was not in the image of the Ideal to day, it was steadily working towards that end; that it was not only evolving and

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changing, but advancing and moving upwards, ever working itself freer and freer from ignorance, from ugliness, from impurity, and from injustice. I had to show that just as a man's nature is known by the end at which he aims, so the nature of the First Cause must be determined by the end towards which He is seen to be working—however much at any given point of time the means adapted to that end (and which are necessitated both by the element of Time and by the ground-plan of the original design) may seem to negative it. Otherwise one might argue that there was no such thing as Reason in the world, because at a given geological period there were no creatures in existence higher than the monsters of the deep. But here I was confronted with a second difficulty, namely of how to focus the vast multiplicity of Nature and Life, so as to bring out their real tendency and drift. I saw that here I should have to deal not with individuals as such, but with lines of fixed tendency; and only with such of these lines as should show a progressive hierarchy and chain of means and ends. And here, perhaps, it may be as well to pause for a moment to consider in what relation such a definite chain of tendencies would stand to the Darwinian Hypothesis. To begin with I may remark that the present position of that hypothesis need offer no barrier to any speculative construction from the point of view of means and ends, of proximate or of final causes. The original theory of Darwin —that of 'Natural Selection'— by which the infinite diversity of species both of plants and animals, was referred to the operation of the struggle for existence among them in selecting such chance specimens as happened to arise and were best adapted to their environment, and killing off the unfit; has now been degraded by Darwin's own disciples from its position as a true cause, and relegated to a quite subordinate one, that namely of mere overseer and scavenger, to carry off on the one hand by starvation or death the weak and inefficient, the wrecks, and all the waifs and strays that fall by the roadside, and on the other to keep those

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who survive, close down to their task and accurately adapted to the special work they have to perform. As the originating cause of species, it has had to be abandoned. Indeed, as Romanes points out, if Natural Selection were to be alone operative, instead of the infinite variety of types of creatures which Nature seems to have at heart, we should have them all lumped and aggregated into a single type. To get the infinite variety of species, Nature not only gives rise to abnormal variations, but protects these variations from being swamped again, by initiating independent variations in the sexual organs, which shall prevent intercrossing with the parent or allied species. And it is only when this has been done, that Natural Selection can come in and operate, as it does, with the happiest effect. But as the secret causes of these independent variations both in general structure and in the sexual organs, are admittedly unknown, the question of the origin of Species still remains an open problem which speculation is at liberty to treat from a higher point of view. Natural Selection in reference to peopling the earth, is like gravitation in walking, or the pressure of the atmosphere in breathing, or the beating of the heart and the circulation of the blood in the continuance of vitality. It is automatic and almost taken for granted, and one would no more look to it for an explanation of the finer problems of species than one would look to gravitation and pressure for an explanation of problems of physiology or chemistry, or to the functions of the heart for an explanation of the purposes of life itself. True as far as it goes, to erect Natural Selection into the sole cause or even cause at all of Species, is absurd. The fact of evolution is true on any hypothesis, but Natural Selection is not necessarily the cause of evolution. It is true that it is everywhere at work, but that is only because animals have everywhere to be fitted to their environment as children have to be fitted with boots and shoes. I had gone carefully into the evidence adduced in its support from the beginning, and had long pondered the subject, but

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with the best will in the world I was never able seriously to look to it for the solution of any problem which was of importance in its bearings on life. It had to be borne in mind and reckoned with, in the same way as we bear in mind the fact of gravitation, but that was all. When held up as a paper lantern to illuminate the mystery of existence, one felt with Carlyle like kicking one's foot through it; and that with all deference and respect to the illustrious author himself who was as modest and candid as he was great. I should as soon dream of phrenology being an explanation of the human mind, as of Natural Selection *alone* being an explanation of the Problem of Existence. But to return.

To get the Laws or Tendencies of the World as a chain of means and ends in an ascending hierarchy in which the Ideal can be seen at work, we have carefully to choose the intellectual instruments for the work. And to begin with we may say that as the question is one of means and ends, that is to say of *function*, and not of *structure*, Physical Science can be thrown out altogether, for its laws only concern the structure of things and have no bearing at all on their function. But how among the countless functions of things are we to find the hierarchy of those that are means and ends to each other? This puzzled me for a long time, but at last I saw that just as the human embryo passes in its stages through the embryos of all the great divisions of the animal kingdom that lie beneath it and have preceded it in Time; so all the Forces and Tendencies of the world have their condensed summary and epitome of general function in the body and mind of man, and there receive their interpretation. In the pamphlet above referred to I thus describe the way in which I conceived these Tendencies to be inter-related and brought to a unity:—

> 'The *mechanical* forces appear in the structure of the heart and in the circulation of the blood; the *chemical* forces in the disintegration of the food by the juices of the stomach, and its combustion in the body; the *organic* forces, in the secreting organs and in the waste and repair of tissue; the *spiritual* forces in the

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mind. Now the physical, chemical, and organic forces are concerned only with *structure*, and the fact that the functions performed by these forces are *unconscious* and unobtrusive, as it were, proves that they are only subordinate instruments, and that the Physical Science which deals with them is only an *instrument of investigation*, not a *standpoint of interpretation*. The heart, lungs, and stomach in their healthy state, give us no intimation of their existence, their action is attended by neither pleasure nor pain, proving that they are the necessary but subordinate instruments for higher ends. In the lower animals, Self-preservation and Reproduction occupy the largest portion of *conscious* existence, and are accordingly the highest functions. In man, they occupy but a comparatively small portion, and leave room for the play and expansion of intellect and character. If then, the physical and organic forces are concerned only with structure, and with structures that are *unconscious* many of them, we may, in endeavouring to show the ends to which the Tendencies of the World are working, practically leave them out of account, and restrict ourselves only to those tendencies which have emerged into consciousness.

'The Tendencies to *Self-preservation and Reproduction* are the most immediate and pressing. They are ministered to, not only by the special senses, physical powers, and lower appetites, but by pride, envy, vanity, combativeness, and fear. They furnish the warp into which Time has to weave his most variegated colours. There must be this continuous web of existence, for the Eternal to work out His designs.

The Tendency to *Ascension* runs through all highly-organised beings. Everything looks upwards. With animals Might is the test of Right. Physical Power is their highest distinction. The strongest have the best chance to survive and propagate, and to them the females are most strongly attracted. Women love the heroic, strong, and wise; and Beauty, in the last analysis, is only Nature's representative of these high qualities, and always refers to *spiritual* attributes. This tendency of the race to ascend on the ground of sexual preference is secured to the individual by his mental constitution. We are all led by *Imagination*, which invests its object with a kind of infinitude, and leads us on to emulation. The dullest are led by it. It is neither the gold itself, nor the mere satisfaction of his physical wants, that dazzles the miser's eye, but the undefined region of delight that is opened up to his imagination. This leading of the Imagination appears early in life. The boy sees all the world in his games and youthful contests, and works for the prize at the village school as if it were a kingdom. The enamoured youth sees the best of everything in his maiden. The man falls into *Hero-worship*. Our admiration is

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the thing we ourselves would wish to be, and to which we endeavour to elevate ourselves. What a man in his heart admires most, gives the clue to his character. His talents all minister to it, and around it all his thoughts and feelings revolve. *Ideals* are only another phase of this ascending tendency. They are made up of the complex web of experience and imagination, and are the stars by which we direct our course through life. They lie, like glittering points, on all sides of the horizon, and towards them the busy world of men are seen making their way. The part played by *Individualization* in the upward movement is no less important. On the circumference of the World is the immense diversity of things, where the game seems to be, how to ring the greatest number of changes on a few fixed principles. These separate existences reflect on each other their own special beauties, and multiply to infinity the objects of aspiration. The love of personality plays an important part in our education. We digest our code of morals from it, and endeavour to embody in ourselves the special virtues which we admire in others. Hence the charm and stimulus of biography, history, and novels, compared with which all mere scholastic teaching, which does not sink into the character, is trivial and superficial.

'But these ideals, when attained, do not fill up the heart. The boy outgrows his sports; the youth, his maiden; the man, his idolatries. Wealth does not satisfy; place and power, when attained, lose the vagueness and brilliancy which dazzled us and drew us on, and shrink into littleness. The sensualist's path leads to disgust. Special attainments and points of virtue, too, fail to satisfy, and we learn at last that there is no rest but in God. Thus these illusions instruct while they deceive. But unless the mind is quick and apprehensive, we do not run to the end of this chain of deceptions, and so stop short of the goal. As long as our minds rest on any of these proximate objects of pursuit, we cannot dedicate ourselves to God, for two opposite infinites cannot possess the mind at once.

'There is another factor in Ascension which is too important to be passed over without notice, viz., the *antagonism* of the higher and lower forces of Nature and Mind. For example, the obstinacy of earth, wood, iron, develop invention and mechanical skill; the necessities of life and the complexity of our surroundings call out all our resources; and the control of the passions, so necessary to social order, exercises and strengthens virtue.

'The foregoing tendencies exist only in the mind, and if they rested there progress would cease. How, then, is the world benefited? Observe, first, as a connecting link, the tendency to *Unity*. Give a man time, and his mind will become a unity, and everything he does will be significant. His actions will become one with his feelings, and his feelings one with his thought. This

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tendency to unity makes possible the realisation of our ideals. Without it, life would want definiteness of aim. It concentrates the powers of the mind for united effort, and counteracts that love of variety, which, if persistently indulged in, confuses thought, relaxes the character, and dissipates organised effort. To reach it is the unceasing endeavour of the mind.

'Connected with this Tendency to Unity is the Tendency to *Embodiment*. The World itself is the embodiment of Spirit; language, facial and bodily expression, are the embodiments of thought and feeling, of which Literature and Art are the more permanent forms. Character is the embodiment within ourselves of Thought, slowly built up and consolidated. Action, too, is the embodiment of Thought. In the pursuit of ideals, we pave every step with work, with action, and thus the world is benefited, although the individual may be sacrificed.

'This Tendency to Embodiment is further assisted by the Tendency to *Belief*. Without this tendency, action would be weak and nerveless, not strong and direct. The belief we have in the beneficence of Nature is very beautiful. We give ourselves calmly up to sleep, and rest without suspicion, expecting to awaken to renewed life. We trust ourselves to the elements, to our food, its safe passage into the stomach and subsequent changes in the blood, and conversion into strength and beauty. We trust to the continued beating of our hearts, and the continuance of life from moment to moment; to our continued sanity, although the chaos of madness lies always near us. We trust to the rotation of seasons, crops, and verdure, although the earth's surface is only a beautiful skin, beneath which boils a cauldron of confused elements. We trust that a man's character is truly represented by his sensible motions, although his soul cannot be seen; and to the immutability of God and His laws, although He himself is hidden from us.

'The Tendency to *Co-operation* redoubles the force both of Belief and Action, and still further assists in keeping the *visible* world following in the track of the *ideal*. We all need sympathy. The high thought would die out of us, did it not meet with recognition from our fellow-man. Society, accordingly, is the arena where our talents find room to expand. The bond of union is always a common sentiment or idea. Friendships are founded on identity of feeling. Associations of men have always some dominant thought, around which they unite. Institutions are the visible expressions of those thoughts. Church and Government correspond to the two most comprehensive divisions of human interest—the welfare of the soul and the welfare of the body. Society, by providing for the lawful exercise of all our impulses, diminishes the temptations to crime. If the passions are strong, you may marry; if the desire for property is strong,

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you may work, not steal. Government takes retaliation out of our hands, and leaves no room for private revenge; and by affording protection to all, gives the higher faculties of our nature a chance to expand.

'But how are the accomplished results of human thought and effort secured against Time and Change? By the Tendency to the *Conservation of the Good*. Time swallows all things but the Good, which steadily works on, and accumulates from age to age. Custom is one element in this tendency. The world is the slave of custom. To the aspiring youth, Truth itself seems powerless against it. On our entrance into life we are dressed in certain customary modes of thought, feeling, and behaviour, and many of us wear the same livery all our lives. We take our creeds from our fathers, and our morals as well as fashions from Society, and applaud or condemn as it dictates. These things are in the air we breathe, and this atmospheric education influences our conduct more than any other. Conformity to custom meets with the world's applause, and in every drawing-room appears in the form of stock-sentiment. But custom subserves a good purpose. It is the break on the wheel of change. It follows thought, although at a great distance, and keeps institutions alive until the good that was once in them has departed and entered into other forms.

'Observe, again, how the best modes of alleviating physical labour are transmitted from age to age. Manual labour is superseded by machinery, and inferior machines are laid aside only when better come into use. The accumulation of scientific facts, the increase both in the number and the delicacy of scientific instruments, enlarge our knowledge of the physical laws. This knowledge reacts, in turn, on the arts, and produces still further improvements. These results are the slow accumulations of the ages which they have survived. In like manner there is a tendency to preserve all good books and all good works of art. Homer and Raphael still live to instruct the youth of the present day. History preserves the memorable experiences of the world, and leaves its daily trivialities to be forgotten. And thus the essence of the past is distilled into the present.

'But there are *false* as well as *true* Ideals. These false ideals get embodied, and have sometimes dominated whole ages, producing endless confusion; and the question is, what prevents the world's retrograding?

'Consider, first, the Tendency to *Justice*. Intellect is the power of discerning the Tendencies of the World in their natural subordinations. The observance of these laws is enforced by Justice. All civil, moral, and social codes, are but better or worse reflections of this dominating tendency. Nature has at heart the coronation of Virtue, and takes a short cut to her end by making

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Might the test of Right. This is the tune the nations have marched to, and throughout all its variations (which we call history) the original air is heard. The individual, too, if he sinks his nobility of character, loses influence, becomes less in the scale of being, and must submit to superior domination.

'Again, the Tendency to *Adaptation* puts a cushion between us and the rough corners of things that have been jostled from their places. It enables us to float, when otherwise we should sink. We gradually adapt ourselves to new climates, new countries, new manners, new morals, and new modes of thought; and die when age makes us too rigid for new and wider conceptions. Then there is the Tendency to *Compassion*, which breaks the force of Fate to which we are all exposed, and cheers the heart for new endeavours. The sympathy of our fellow-men redoubles the strength of all our active powers, invigorates the will, and gives fresh courage to despair.

'The foregoing tendencies all unite to keep the world following in the track of the great men who march in the van. And we have seen that these men, after passing through all proximate illusions, find their ideal in God, and their final rest in reliance on Him alone. This is the consummation of manhood. When attained, it expresses itself in Heroism, Worship, and Art, which are ends in themselves, and which correspond to the different sides of our nature, its tendency to *Action*, *Contemplation*, and *Beauty*.

'All things in Nature struggle towards Beauty; and deformity, like evil, is the result of Necessity, and does not lie in the essence of things. The artist strives to restore this ideal beauty on canvas or stone, and its pursuit is a source of pure enjoyment, when cultivated in a religious spirit.

'Worship should be the flower of Culture, the harmonious outcome of all our feelings, chastened and refined, and not a daub. It should be in the grain, not a mere veneering, and is the expression of inward peace.

'The history of the world abounds in examples of Heroism. These great souls, scattered through distant ages and nations, and quickened before their time, are the high-water marks of humanity, and announce what, one day, will be universal. They reached the point where the human melts into the divine.'

In this way by taking the largest general Tendencies or Laws of the World and the Human Mind, I demonstrated to my own satisfaction (and I trust it may prove to that of others), the existence and progressive realization of the Ideal in the world, as I had already done in the human mind, and although it was my earliest piece of writing I do not think that in

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essentials I could add much to it to-day; my later books being concerned rather with demonstrating it in detail in the history of Civilizations, Societies, and States. In a second pamphlet entitled 'Considerations on the Constitution of the World,' in which the influence of Emerson is clearly visible, I advanced a stage farther and showed that these tendencies can be so arranged as to lend support to the great Law of Polarity on which Spencer's 'Philosophy of Evolution' is based, and which runs through all Nature; thus demonstrating that the same Unity of Plan runs through the Moral and Spiritual World, which he had exhibited in the Physical World, and from which I argued the Unity of the Divine that was at the bottom of it all. The following is my summing up:—

> 'We have seen, then, that the World is constituted of a series of balances, on an ascending scale. In physics, we found that action and reaction were equal, that there was an equilibrium in ebb and flow, centripetal and centrifugal motions, in the compensating alternations of day and night, sleep and wake. We found that "all mental action consisted of differentiations and integrations of states of consciousness," that the balance between these two opposite states is necessary to health, insanity being nothing but fixedness of thought without change, or incessant change without rest. We have seen, too, that the perturbations of the passions in nations or individuals, were balanced by natural reactions; "swarmeries" of opinion, by insight; and local idolatries, by change of association. In the domain of Science we saw that the immense variety of scientific facts was balanced by the laws that underlie them,—individual facts, by generalisations, and the widest generalisations, by unity. Rising still higher into the region of the Intuitions, we found that the moral sentiment was the balance to selfishness; the *public* nature in us to our *private* interests; benevolence to helplessness, and hope to fear. And further, in looking at the conversion of truth into action, we saw the same provision made. We found that the dangerous nature of the elements was counteracted by science and art; that Custom balanced Innovation; the Conservation of the Good, perpetual Change; Conservatism, Reform; Might, the resistance of circumstances; and the power of Adaptation, the changes of the environment.
>
> Such being the Constitution of the World, I wish now to point out the Unity of Plan running through the whole, so that begin where you will, you find the same principle at work. Take, for

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instance, our progress in culture. We observe a few facts, and throw them into a general principle of belief. On this, we stand and act, while acquiring further experience. We then enlarge our first principle to balance the increase of facts, throw the whole into a general principle again, and so on, throughout the whole of our education, which is only a repetition of the same process carried upwards to higher and higher planes. The progress of society is the same. Certain ideas are in the air and dominate an age, balancing its acquired experience. These determine the form of government, and on these it stands and works. Succeeding generations, with wider knowledge and increased power, finding themselves cramped by the institutions of other days, either slowly stretch or violently rupture the bands, and throw out institutions more in accord with present needs. This process repeats itself through the successive stages of Despotism, Monarchy, and Democracy. In religion, too, the same process is seen in the progress of Fetishism and Man-worship, up to the most refined forms of transcendental Theism.

Again, if we take a general survey of the World, we shall see that this Unity of plan is not fanciful or theoretical, but is worked into the very texture of things. Take, for instance, the balance that is everywhere kept between *public* and *private* interests. No leaf is suffered to overshadow the plant, but in form and proportion is chastened into harmony with the whole. Goethe said that provision was made that no tree should grow into the sky. Vegetable and animal life are so balanced, as to keep the proportion of gases in the atmosphere constant. An animal is furnished with powers of aggression and self-defence, but subserves the harmony of the whole by being the prey to another. In man, the nature of this *public* element is found to be Moral. The Moral Sentiment in us compels us to respect the general good, while pushing our individuality and self-interest to the farthest point.

We have seen, then, that the world is an ascending scale of balances, with Physical forces at the bottom, Moral at the top; a ladder with its foot on Earth, its summit in Heaven. We have seen, too, the unity of plan running through the whole system of things to the remotest fibre; so that the most insignificant object, even a grain of sand or blade of grass, is a microcosm, or mirror of the Universe.

And the Divine to which it all referred itself, I characterized as follows:—

And now, in concluding, I have to point out that, besides the successive planes of equilibrated thought, there is also, in the World and in the Human Mind, *the Divine*. This is the deep

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background, the mysterious incomprehensible Life that envelops us all; the Spirit, from which emanate the countless myriads of creatures that bloom their little lives and fade away; out of which we have emerged for a moment, and into which we vanish; a thing of wonder, unspeakable, awful. Over its unfathomable depths, the endless procession of life glides like ripples over the deep sea. It is the endless generator of things, the source of this perpetual *becoming*. It is the *Public Nature* of the World, and is seen less in individual objects, than in the landscape; in individual actions, than in moral order; in special talents, than in genius. As it is in the World, so it is in the Human Mind. It is this, which we feel to be the real balance power in the constitution. It is this that gives Truth its power, Virtue its courage, Love its sacrifice, but is itself no special point of truth, virtue, or love. It is this to which all men appeal for justice from oppression. It is this that shines through all the fetishes, images, or deities, under which, in different ages and stages of culture, men have sought to embody the Divine Idea. It is this to which all men draw nigh to worship. It is this which is the infinite horizon of truth, which we for ever approach and which for ever recedes. It is this which inspires virtue, but before which each particular virtue fades, and which lures us on to higher efforts. It is this which inspires success, and then condemns it in the light of more glorious attempts. We cannot define it or comprehend it, but 'it exists, and will exist.' To this Being we have given the name of God.

Further than this of the Divine in general terms I have never considered myself justified in dogmatizing; as any attempt to define the intimate nature of God, or the *modus operandi* of His relation to the World, has always seemed to me to be beyond the reach of the human faculties. So far I am an Agnostic. Nor did I consider that it mattered whether God were within the World or outside of it, whether he were a personal and distinct Being or were a pure, abstract Self-Consciousness. But at the same time one was intuitively bound to assume a Supreme Will, as the only kind of Supreme Being or Unity which implicitly contains the notion of self-conscious intelligence, of motive and personality, and so best meets the needs of all sides and aspects of the human spirit. And to myself as a philosopher this was still more imperative, for the only real conception of cause is that of will, the so-called scientific causes connecting things in this world, being but a

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series of *orderly effects* and not of real causes at all, a series of mathematical equivalents which are causes only in the sense that two and two may be said to be the cause of four. As to the relation which exists between God and the World, about which nothing can be known in the strict sense of the term by us, if I were forced to make a choice I should prefer, perhaps, the form given to it by Hegel, namely the form in which God and Nature are regarded as but the two opposite sides of a single Absolute Self-Consciousness in which when God thinks of Himself, if one may say so, He is God proper, when He thinks of the *other* than Himself He is what we know as Nature; although even this when pressed, proves as we shall see, to be illusory like the rest. I prefer this, however, to that of Goethe who with Spinoza liked to think of God as Absolute Substance, and the world of Mind and Nature as *necessary* modes of His attributes; or to that of Emerson, where God is figured as the life of the tree, and the World its leaves and blossoms; or of Carlyle, where God is the body and the World the 'clothing,' and so on; inasmuch as these latter are all based on categories lower than the category of self-consciousness which is the category used by Hegel. But then it must be borne in mind that while Hegel took his principle of the evolution of the 'notion' or self-consciousness, seriously, and as the real and true *explanation* of the World; Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle were too wary to be trapped so easily, and while using the images of tree, of clothing, of substance, and so forth, did so only as metaphors or allegories, seeing clearly and declaring uncompromisingly that the attempt to *explain* the World out and out was an impertinence, and was beyond the reach of the human faculties. For to bridge the gulf between Mind and Matter, which after all was the real problem, was as impossible with Hegel from the side of Mind as it was with Spencer from the side of Matter. Hegel attempted to do it by trying to show that there was not that *absolute* difference between Mind and Matter, which philosophers and the vulgar

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equally have imagined. He argues in this way, that just as there is something common to all material things, however unlike they may be, because they are all parts of *one* world of Matter, so there is something common to Mind and Matter because they can both be contained in one single act of self-consciousness; and concludes that they cannot be *absolutely* exclusive of one another but only *relatively* so. But this would be to throw overboard the testimony of self-consciousness itself, which declares them to be entirely opposite in nature and attribute, in favour of the mere *form* of self-consciousness. For just as the two poles of a magnet although covered by or contained in the one magnet, need not thereby have anything in common, so mental and material things although covered by or contained in the single self-consciousness which involves them both, need not have anything in common by which it is possible to bridge the gulf between them. They are contained in one self-consciousness, it is true, but on examination it will be found that this is purely metaphorical and for purposes of expression merely. At bottom it is a question of relations not between Mind and Matter, but between mind and mind, or matter and matter. When, for example, we say 'John is good,' we do not mean to imply that the extended, material substance John has anything in common with the immaterial mental quality thought of as good, but only (if it is his body that is in question) that it has some material quality which by a metaphor we call good, otherwise it must be a mental quality that is intended. But if, going beyond metaphor and purposes of expression, we try to really affirm something mental of a material substance, or something material of a mental one, we shall find that self-consciousness will no more cover the two, in the sense of proof that something in common must thereby exist between them, than it will cover a white sound or a sweet colour. It will eject them summarily as incompatibles. Of course as mind and matter both exist together in the world, self-consciousness must bring them *together* in the mind, but to

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imagine that because it can bring them side by side, it has therefore really united them, is a dream. And, accordingly, as we should expect, we find that Hegel when deducing the categories of things one from the other, jumps as jauntily from a mental to a material one as if it were the most natural thing in the world. At one moment we find him engaged with such categories as, say, 'force and manifestation,' 'substance and accident,' 'inner and outer,' etc., where both sides, it is evident, are material in their nature, but suddenly before we know where we are, when our back is turned, he will by a sleight of hand bring us out from under the hat such a category as, say, 'soul and expression,' 'idea and object,' 'Spirit and Nature,' and the like, where one limb of the pair of opposites is palpably mental, while the other is material. Now when our senses shall without sleight of hand, find a bridge between a colour and a sound, a sound and a taste, or other incompatibles, I shall believe that logic will find it between Mind and Matter,—but not before.

And so at last after long and weary wandering I had found my lost Ideal; and from that time onward the depression from which I had been suffering for four or five years, during which time I had rarely risen from a book without a sense of pain and bereavement, passed completely away. And then I saw with Goethe and Carlyle, that for those who longed to live in the Ideal there was practically a boundless field open and at hand; that there was no situation in which a man could be placed that could not be idealized, be made more beautiful, more true, more moral, more poetic, according to the side of the Ideal to which he was more especially drawn;—and all with the conviction that nothing could be lost; that if the work itself were destroyed, the thought and character from which it sprang would not die, but would transmit their virtue to others; for if the ark of God is to be carried by the men of one generation to the point where it is taken up by the men of the next, it seems reasonable that each one must have his

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appointed task. And believing, as I did, with Emerson that each man should keep as far as possible to that work which is most congenial to his whole nature, I resolved that my own course should be first to make known what I had found to others, and then for my life's task to labour in those parts of the field of truth which were still open, and mainly in the investigation of those laws of the World and of the Human Mind in which I had hitherto been engaged, and to the study of which, by nature I was most inclined; with the feeling that a knowledge of these would be the best alike for conduct and morality, for action and contemplation. And with this view I resolved to follow in the footsteps of Goethe, and to neglect nothing the study and contemplation of which would help me to my end,—neither Physical Science nor Psychology, Sociology, History, Politics, Religions, the lives of Great Men, of Religious Founders, of Men of Action, of Mystics, of Men of the World, the Market-place, and the Street.

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PART II.

—

ENGLAND.

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BOOK III.

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MY INNER LIFE,

BEING A CHAPTER IN

PERSONAL EVOLUTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

PART II.—ENGLAND.

BOOK III.—LITERARY EXPERIENCES.

MY FIRST ATTEMPT.
CIVILIZATION.
STYLE.
A POLITICAL INSTANCE.
THE DAEMONIC ELEMENT.
POLITICAL ECONOMY.
AUTOBIOGRAPHY.
INTERSTITIAL THINKERS.
ISOLATION AND DEPRESSION.

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CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST ATTEMPT.

ALL being ready, I had gone down to Scotland with much trepidation with the object of writing out the small contribution which as we saw in the last chapter I had made towards the solution of the World-problem; and after three months hard work on it there, I had brought it back with me to London, in the shape of a short essay of about twenty pages; and was now looking about me for a publisher. When in Scotland I had been told by one who was reputed to know, that if my essay possessed any originality at all, all that was necessary to ensure its acceptance by a magazine, was to drop it quietly into the Editor's box! Very well, I thought, I will answer for the originality! But the more I thought of it on my return, the more uncomfortable did I become at the idea of dropping this precious document into the cold and remorseless jaws of the Editorial letter-box, from whose dark and mysterious recesses I feared I might never see it again! I must have further advice on the point, I felt, before taking so rash a step; and accordingly one fine spring morning in April I made my way down to Chelsea to see Carlyle, who had asked me to come and see him again when I was in any difficulty. On mentioning the object of my visit a shade of disappointment fell over me I remember, when instead of losing his composure at the announcement of so important a piece of news as that at last I

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had laid my first goose-egg, he took no notice of the circumstance but went on quietly to observe that he 'had now quite done with editors and folk of that kind,' and referred me to Mr. Harrison the late librarian of the London Library, than whom he said he knew of no man of a more encyclopædic or varied knowledge of all that pertained to bibliography, and especially of all that bore on the commercial, editorial, social, and other concomitant aspects of literature. In less than an hour I had found my way to the Library in St. James' Square, MS. in pocket, and into the presence of the Librarian himself. He was a man of medium stature, of genial expression, and with a clean-shaven face that at the first blush reminded me strongly of the portraits I had seen of Macaulay; and I was at once (by the association of ideas, I suppose,) prepared to credit him with all those encyclopædic qualities of memory with which Carlyle had so lavishly endowed him. He received me pleasantly, listened attentively to what I had to say, but when at last I came to the point by asking him roundly which of the editors—of the 'Nineteenth Century,' the 'Contemporary,' the 'Fortnightly,' or 'Macmillan'—ought in his judgment to have the honour of publishing my essay, he quite dashed my spirits for the moment by rising from his seat, looking benignantly at me over his spectacles and saying in his kindly way 'You won't be discouraged, I hope, if you don't succeed. The editors in these days of signed articles, you know, go so much by established reputation, and this, I understand, is your first attempt.' I admitted that it was, but fortified with the simple idea of my Scotch friend as to the originality and the editorial letter-box, I quickly recovered myself, and went on to explain with much animation and *naïveté* (and with as much insistence as if he denied it!) that my article was really *very* original, and that I had been given to understand that all that would be necessary would be for me to drop it without further ado into the Editor's box! He did not seem to be as much impressed by my assurance of this as I could have wished, and in reply

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only went so far by way of mitigating what I thought to be the undue rigour of his judgment, as to say that of course there would be no harm in trying them one after another, that I ought to send it to them in the regular way by post with return prepaid in case it was not accepted, and that he hoped that one or other of them might see his way to take it. Upon this I thanked him and withdrew, somewhat disconcerted but comforting myself when I got outside with the reflection that he could not know anything of its contents as he had not read it, and flattering myself how surprised he would be if he only knew how really original and important it was! And then began for me the long wandering in the wilderness of literature, the weary round of offers and refusals of MSS., which continued without a break for more than twenty years—perhaps one of the longest on record.

I began with the 'Nineteenth Century,' I remember. It had only been started a few months, and owing to the support which it had from the outset received from the members of the Metaphysical Society which at that time contained the names of all that was most illustrious in the thought and literature of England, it was carrying all before it. It had been hinted to me by the Librarian, that access to its columns would be more difficult perhaps than in the case of the other magazines, but as it numbered among its most constant contributors Mr. Mallock, then a young man like myself, I brushed aside the difficulty and boldly sent the essay in. It was returned promptly and with thanks. I then thought of sending it to the 'Fortnightly,' but was advised that the tone of the essay which was anti-materialistic, would operate rather as a bar to its acceptance than otherwise, and so sent it on to the 'Contemporary' instead. In this I was wrong, for the 'Fortnightly' was at that time under the conduct of John Morley, than whom no one would have been more prompt to detect and to welcome any shade of originality or merit, let it come from what quarter it would. From the 'Contemporary,'

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too, it came back, and I then sent it to 'Macmillan's' with the same result. Further than these I did not go, for my pride would not permit me to send it to any organ but those of the very first water. Some one suggested 'Mind,' but as this was almost entirely a purely metaphysical journal, and as it was against *all* of the older systems of metaphysics that much of my after work was to be directed, I did not feel it becoming to send it in. What then was to be done? Here, I said to myself, is the outline of a brand new system of philosophy, the fruit of years of study and reflection; original and convincing too, I flattered myself, and all within the compass of twenty pages, and to be had almost for the asking! I was disappointed and not a little indignant, and resolved that I would call at once on the various men of eminence whose published opinions were most in harmony with my own, to see if I could not interest them sufficiently in my new doctrines to obtain their help with the editors. Accordingly having looked up their addresses in the Directory, and mapped out in diagram the different localities in which they lived, I resolved in order that no time might be lost, to make a descent on them all in the course of a single morning! I started early on my round, MS. in pocket, ready to draw it on them at a moment's notice if they should give me the slightest encouragement; the young lady who was about to become my wife accompanying me, and waiting for me in the nearest confectioners' shops while I went in. All received me most pleasantly, in spite of the gross interruption to their work which a morning's visit must have entailed, but of which at that time I was quite unconscious.

The first on whom I called was an illustrious philosopher and theologian, of great age, authority, and dignity. Feeling that time was precious I lost none in beating about the bush, but plunged at once *in medias res*, and before he could stop me had well nigh emptied the whole contents of my essay on his revered and devoted head! He bore it in his gentle way without a murmur or show of impatience, and when I at last

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paused to emphasize a particular position which I had taken up in opposition to Spencer, and which I thought would make him prick up his ears, he drew me on to my after confusion by giving way in a weak moment to an expression of sympathy with my view. The point in question was one which I had entitled in the essay, 'the Scale in the Mind'; and on my explaining what I meant by this phrase, his face lighted up into a glow and he exclaimed, 'Why that is precisely the position in other words that I took up in my reply to Huxley in a debate at the Metaphysical Society.' So overcome was I at the discovery of this bond of sympathy between us in my then state of tension and excitement, that before he had time to steady himself and resume his gravity, I had drawn the MS. from my pocket and presenting it at him like a pistol, asked him if he would do me the honour to read it! At this new turn his face froze instantly, and he proceeded at once gravely but not unkindly to assure me that at his age and with his time so much occupied, he must really decline; and then seeing my countenance fall, and feeling that perhaps he had taken a sharper curve than he might have led me to expect, he rose from his seat and walked round the room with me, showing me some new books which had been sent him and which he advised me to read, chatting genially all the while, and finally after expressing the hope that I would get the MS. published and then send him a copy which he could read at his leisure, he accompanied me to the door and with much cordiality wished me good morning. When I got outside, I was vexed with myself for my *gaucherie* and indiscretion in asking him to read the MS., and blushed every time I thought of it, and altogether felt very uncomfortable. I was disappointed too; but in a different way from what I had felt when the MS. had been returned by the Editors. For in those youthful days a new idea was to me as meat and drink, and often, indeed, had to do duty for the same; and it was as incomprehensible to me that anyone professing to live for

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these great and sacred truths should be indifferent to them when thrust under their very nose, as it were, as it would be to a miser to see gold thrown at the feet of one who was too indifferent to pick it up. It outraged my ideal, and was a great shock to me, and for a long time I could neither understand it nor get over it. It did not occur to me then, (what experience has abundantly taught me since), that gifts so lightly proffered were more likely to be of imaginary than real value, and that the chances that any truth both new and important was likely to be lost by refusing it when thrown at a man in this way, were very small indeed!

In the meantime I had started off for the house of my second victim (my companion making desperate efforts to keep up with me as in my excitement I stalked along!) and we soon became so intent in speculating on what my luck would be on my next visit, that I had quite forgotten the chagrin and disappointment of the last. He was in his study under the sky-lights, and received me pleasantly enough, apologising for the length of staircase I had to traverse before reaching him, and settling himself down to hear what I had to say. I did not detain him long. For it had occurred to me as I came along that the reason I had not succeeded better with the old philosopher whom I had just left, was because I had emptied almost the entire contents of my essay on him, so that the poor man was quite exhausted. This time, I said to myself, I will be brief, and keep to a few main points only. Now it so happened that I had digested the critical parts of my essay under four compendious headings which I accused the pure Materialists of having neglected in their scheme of the World. To these in their naked baldness I stuck grimly, telling them over on my fingers one by one slowly and deliberately as he listened, and sternly repressing the almost uncontrollable temptation I felt to let myself go and spread myself out before him at large! But to my surprise he did not budge, nor did his face betray the least emotion one way or another at the recital;

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on the contrary it wore rather a dazed and bewildered expression, I thought! Nor do I now wonder at it, for when I mention that the four points in question baldly stated, bore such enigmatic legends as the following, some of which the reader has already seen,—'the Scale in the mind,' 'the looking at the World from without instead of from within,' 'the confusion in the choice of the instruments for the investigation of Truth,' and the 'looking at the World with too microscopic an eye,'—it will be apparent to the reader that had he been ten times the philosopher he was, they must have been as mysterious to him as the hieroglyphics on Cleopatra's Needle! No, but what annoyed me was that he did not even ask me what I meant by them! Doubtless he saw by my eye that I was dying to empty the whole bucket on him, and so he skilfully averted this danger by drawing me off from the subject and contents of my essay, to the more practical issue of what was to be done with it. 'Now, I'll tell you what to do,' he said. 'You have sent it you say, to all these different magazines and they have returned it. Well now, break it into pieces (I thought of my four headings), watch your opportunity, and when any subject turns up in the newspapers that will give you a chance, write on it at once, and tack one or other of your points on to the end of it as a moral!' At this point I began to feel a kind of despair creep over me, and was getting bewildered myself, for I could not possibly imagine what conceivable kind of newspaper incident could turn up that would lend itself as illustration to either one or another of these enigmatic and mystical philosophic abstractions of mine. It was evident that though in himself one of the most apprehensive of men, he had not taken in the meaning of what I had said. But I let him continue, and when he went on to say 'the 'Echo' would be just the paper for it, it contains some very serious, solid articles, you know, and you could tack on your points in a short article there very nicely. It is what I did myself,'—the humour of the thing tickled me so that I

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could hardly restrain myself. I thought I saw the little article under the sensational heading—'Child Murder,' 'a Dynamite Conspiracy,' 'a City Fire,' 'a Change of Government,' 'a Political Cave,' 'Another Local Veto Bill,' or 'Engineers' Strike'—and the face of the reader when he got to the bottom to read, 'all this, Mr. Editor, proves what I hold to be a great truth, and one which cannot be too often reiterated, namely that the Scale in the Mind is' etc.; or 'that the looking at the World from without is by no means the same thing as looking at it from within,' or 'that you cannot be too careful in how you handle your intellectual edge-tools, or as to which one you pick up,' etc., and 'that you must not put on your spectacles to look at the moon, or take up your telescope to investigate the feet of a fly!' It was like the patent-pill advertisement at the bottom of a column of newspaper sensation; and when I got out I laughed aloud. The advice was most kindly given, and was in itself not only a most feasible but a most practical suggestion, had it been some new moral, political, or social truth for which I was anxious to get a hearing; but for these high philosophic abstractions on the ultimate structure and constitution of the World,—the idea of it kept me laughing most of the way to the house of the next on my list.

This time it was a lady of great prominence in the intellectual and social movements of the time. I sent in my card, and was shown up to a room on the first floor. She seemed at first annoyed at the intrusion, and looking at me without moving a muscle of her head or face, said in a tone of military severity 'To what, Sir, am I indebted for the honour of this visit?' But when in a half frightened and subdued tone I proceeded quite innocently to explain that I had come to see if she could help me with her advice as to the publication of an article, she was all geniality in a moment, and after listening patiently to the points which I thought I had made good in it, (by this time I had become quite calm, and was able to put them quietly and without the danger of alarming my listener or

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putting her to flight!) she entered sympathetically into all I had to say without hurry or show of impatience, and ended by recommending me to see, whom?—the old theologian who had been the object of my first visit in the morning and who she thought would from the similarity of our views be most interested in what I had just been saying. I was too ashamed to confess that I had already seen him that very morning, and after thanking her for her sympathy and advice, withdrew. I felt I had had quite enough of it for one morning, and made up my mind that nothing further was to come of this particular plan of campaign. My circle had suddenly got back to the point from which it started; the situation was becoming serious; and I felt that if I did not look out, I should be baulked at the outset in my lightly undertaken enterprise of coming to England to conquer the philosophic world! I was indignant, too, and having unbounded energy in those young days, I felt much like that old Ram Dass of whom Carlyle writes, who declared of himself that he 'had enough fire in his belly to burn up the sins of the world!' But what was to be done? A happy thought struck me. Why not publish the essay as a pamphlet, and send copies of it to those representative men in philosophy, religion, and science, with whose works I was familiar and who might quietly read it at their leisure and pronounce on its merits? A capital idea, I thought, and no sooner conceived than I prepared to put it in execution.

But just at this juncture a friend of mine to whom I had been speaking of my bad luck, assured me she knew of a magazine that would be glad to accept it—if I remember rightly even before its contents were known! It was called the 'Churchman's Shilling Magazine,' a religious publication, very proper, but milk-and-watery I imagine, with little circulation and no pay. It was a great come-down to my intellectual pride to have to stoop to this; worse even I thought than tacking it on as a moral to the tail of an article in the *Echo*:

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and at the first suggestion of it, like Mark Twain with the Constantinople sausage, I resolved to 'pass!' But on second thoughts I agreed to accept it. What decided me was firstly, the weak youthful desire to see my article in type at all costs after all this struggle, but mainly that before the type was broken up, I was to have any number of copies I liked struck off at the merely nominal cost of the paper and binding. The essay appeared in due course in the magazine, and for years the copies I received as my share of the spoil, formed a stack under my dressing-table, on which I regularly drew for shaving-paper! Only one review of it, if I remember rightly, came into my hands. It was from a Plymouth paper I think, and the Editor who was apparently as much amazed by its appearance in the pages of this magazine as if it had been some escaped monster, went on to inform the reader that if he wanted a tough and knotty piece of reading, and one whose digestion were present death, here indeed were the article that would give it him!

In due time the pamphlet appeared as printed from the type of the article, and some two hundred copies or more were sent by post to nearly all the representative thinkers, theologians, professors, preachers, lecturers, writers of essays or books, in England, Scotland and Ireland! It was nicely got up and looked quite smart, I thought, in its smoothly-pressed slatey-blue cover; and I was quite proud of it. I had added to the original title of 'God or Force?' the following sub-title, 'Being an attempt to give a harmonious view of the world after showing the limitations of scientific thought.' This I thought sounded well, and I flattered myself it would be very effective; besides it described with sufficient accuracy what it was that I had attempted in these pages.

The pamphlets, then, having been sent off in flights to every quarter of the three kingdoms, I sat anxiously at home awaiting the result. I had not to wait long, for almost immediately, acknowledgements came back in shoals, most of them kindly but formal, but a few which proved that the essay had been read

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carefully by some of the very men and women whom I had most desired to reach. One of them said that I had got hold of some points which he had been teaching to his students for many years, but which he had not yet published; another expressed himself as interested in the use I had made of the idea of 'tendency'; another in the considerations I had adduced to show that the complex tendencies of the world all lead up to the ideal of love; and one, while generous and appreciative, regretted that I should seek to add another to the various theories of the World, and was not surprised that it should have been rejected by the Editors when it was attempted to be digested into twenty pages! But when once all the acknowledgements had come in, everything fell into silence again.

Meanwhile I had been gradually becoming myself dissatisfied with this crude and early production, over which I had spent so much time and been so elate. It was mainly a critical work, and although it contained constructive elements as we have seen, its effect as a whole was rather to pick holes in the Materialistic System of Herbert Spencer, than like him to reduce all the complex elements of Nature to a single Law. Accordingly I now set to work with vigour to repair this deficiency, and after a year or more's work upon it had managed to produce a compact scheme of my own, with a single law, too, running through it all—what I called the Law of Polarity,—and the hint of which I had got from Emerson, as Spencer had got the hint of his Law of Evolution from von Baer. The two laws rested ultimately on the same principle, namely of a unity of Force everywhere existing in Nature in the opposite forms of attraction and repulsion; but the advantage which I claimed for the Law of Polarity over Spencer's elaborated law was this, that while his law with its materialistic premises, did not make room for the *ascension* of things but only for their lateral expansion and differentiation *on the flat* as it were, as a stream that in overflowing a meadow, breaks on its margin and circumference into endless differentiation of eddy and foam but cannot rise higher than its

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source, my statement with its spiritual implications, permitted, like a spiral staircase, of the ascension of things from chaos up to the organized forms of crystal, of vegetable, of animal, and of man; from man savage up to man civilized, and from that up to the disembodied ideals of beauty, morality, and love.

This new essay I had again compressed into the compass of a magazine article which I had entitled 'Considerations on the Constitution of the World,' and was now prepared to make a fresh assault on the close preserves of the higher magazines, with the exception of the 'Fortnightly' for the reason I have given above. But this time I was able, I thought, to approach the Editors with some decided advantages in my favour over those of my first attempt. For in the meantime I had written to a few of those whom I have mentioned as having expressed their interest in my first essay, to ask them if they could be of assistance to me with the Editors in my next venture. They all came promptly to my aid, some of them writing directly to the Editors about me, others writing notes of recommendation which I was to forward myself to the Editors. But in spite of these testimonials the MS. came back from each at the appointed hour with the regularity of Noah's dove, but without the olive leaf to show that land was at last in sight. Not at all daunted by this fresh failure, I determined again to reach as many disinterested and competent judges as possible, whose influence although unseen at the moment, would be ready to appear when the time was ripe; and so had recourse again to the medium of the pamphlet. As before, it was sent to the leading men in the three kingdoms, but without much result. For although my original supporters remained firm in their appreciation, their number was not I think to any appreciable extent increased. What then was the next move to be? The situation which had been getting more and more grave, had now I felt become desperate. I had used up practically the whole stock of my original ideas in these two articles, and was now left high and dry and exhausted. Time, although really

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young, was I felt most urgent and pressing; I was now twenty-nine years of age, I reflected, and was firmly convinced, like Coningsby, that if I did not do something before thirty, I should not do it at all. My medical practice, too, was practically *nil*, and the thousand pounds which I had received from the grateful patient, and on which I had not only subsisted the while, but married, was beginning to run low. It seemed to me more clear than ever that the one object to which I had dedicated my life, was to be baulked after all on the threshold, both by want of means and by the impossibility of gaining a foothold. I had determined never to go back to Canada and confess myself beaten, and so to disappoint the hopes and good wishes of those who had sped me on my way, but was resolved to fight it out to the bitter end in London alone. Meantime I had learned one or two things for my guidance in the future, and as I still hold them, they may be of value to others who may find themselves in a like predicament. The first is that now that the signed article is in vogue in the leading magazines, an Editor although open to accept an article showing originality and merit, on some single aspect or point of philosophy or life, from an unknown writer, is not likely to do so if the author, however original, attempts some condensed scheme of the World as a whole, and especially if he attempts it, as my critic said, in the short space of twenty pages! The second is, that it is always open to the beginner in the last extremity to have his article or book printed and sent to the best judges, with the certainty almost that one or other of them will see its merits, and remember it when the time comes. The third is, that no recommendation of an unknown writer's work by any authority however eminent, counts much with the editor in the days of the signed article, unless the authority in question has taken means at the same time to inform the public that a new writer has appeared, whom it would be well for it to hear. And lastly, that the pamphlet as a literary medium is now dead, and in all probability never again to be revived.

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At this juncture a new idea occurred to me. The Editors and the public, I reflected, although they look askance at the abstract speculations of an unknown writer, may still be willing to listen to compendious expositions of well-known ones. Now up to that time the philosophers by whose writings my own course of thought had been mainly moulded were as we have seen, Plato, Bacon, Goethe, Herbert Spencer, Emerson, Newman and Carlyle. I had arrived at the conclusion that Herbert Spencer had swallowed up, superseded, and embodied in himself all that was true in those of his predecessors who had materialistic leanings, and that Plato, Bacon, Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle had summed up all that could be said for the spiritual or ideal side of things. I accordingly had pondered the doctrines of these great writers with more care and over a greater period of time than those of any other writers before or since—with the exception perhaps of Hegel and Comte in later years. I selected, then, as subjects of my exposition the works of Herbert Spencer, Emerson, and Carlyle, as being at once the three most modern and perhaps the most influential, and my plan was to present the reader with such an epitome of their speculations, that the new standpoint which I myself had occupied might be clearly seen. I began with Herbert Spencer, and my object was to draw his speculations to the single point or focus from which they all alike radiated, and having grasped this firmly, to so light it up that the great central weakness of the scheme would be seen at a glance by the reader for himself. In this way I hoped to clear the way before starting on Carlyle and Emerson, with whose bent of thought and feeling my own nature had the most affinity, and to whose speculations I was most inclined. I could then so work in my own standpoint, I thought, that it would be seen to be different from all three of them, and in a manner to be a composite or unified synthesis of them all. For I had come to these subjects as we have seen just at the time when the discoveries and speculations of Darwin and Spencer had

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revolutionized our views of the world and of life as much as the Copernican. Astronomy had done before them, and had made a return to the old points of view forever impossible. The effect of these new views on older Idealists like Carlyle and Emerson who had grown up under a different conception of things, was to throw them into an attitude of almost pure antagonism, without in any way modifying the views in which they had been brought up. The Metaphysical Idealists of the Universities on the other hand, who were practically all followers of Hegel, had already reached such a point of aloofness and remoteness from all things natural or scientific, human or divine, that scientific discoveries and cataclysms sufficient to call into existence whole new worlds, or species of being, or races of men, would have passed before their eyes unheeded and without ruffling even the fringe of their skirts! If they had stooped to notice them, it would only have been to point to them as but instances of the law before which they bent with religious solemnity, and which had to them a kind of mystical or magical, and sacred efficacy, the law namely that 'a thing must go out of itself and be different from itself in order that by returning to itself it might become all the more itself' etc.! Of the Theological Idealists, again, Dr. Martineau, like Carlyle and Emerson, had already received the bent of his thought before Darwin and Spencer appeared, and although no one more quickly and with more power and thoroughness mastered their real drift and tendency, he had spent the greater part of his life in clearing the ground before he was confronted by the new elements which the Darwinian hypothesis had thrown into speculation; and it was not until a very advanced period of his old age, that his great constructive work appeared. The older Materialists, again, like Mill, were altogether superseded; being insulated and floated off their old base by the larger generalizations of Spencer; and so in spite of their great merits as transition stones, soon disappeared from view; while the early disciples of Darwin, like Huxley

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and Tyndall, were so entranced by the new scientific generalizations of their Master, that they never thought of seriously reconciling them with the idealism of their youth,—until, indeed, in their old age, when they returned to the old idealism ever the more fondly as to some long lost friendship of their boyhood, but when it had alas! become too late. So that when I began to write, no work had yet appeared in which an attempt was made to handle anew, and from the Idealist's standpoint, the old World Problem, now rendered infinitely more complex and difficult by the flinging into it of these great unwieldy and unmanageable boulders of scientific speculation and generalization. All sides of the problem were now there, and were fully elaborated, but their representatives were, by reason of their contemporaneity and the diverse streams of tradition from which they had drunk, at daggers drawn, and incapable of either properly appreciating or of assimilating and doing justice to each other. Carlyle was opposed to Spencer, and Emerson to Darwin; Huxley and Tyndall to Martineau; Martineau to Carlyle, Darwin, and Spencer; and all of them more or less to Hegel and Comte. But from my boyhood my room, like the Chapel of Alexander Severus, was hung round with the pictures of them all, as of the greater gods, and to them I came prepared to offer an equal homage and love.

Having finished the essay on Spencer from the point of view at once of a disciple, and of one who at the same time regarded the facts through the differently coloured spectacles of the Idealist, I sent it in to one of the Magazines, and was at once surprised and overjoyed when a letter came announcing what I considered to be its virtual acceptance by the Editor,—although as afterwards appeared he had only used the words that he 'hoped to insert it when the pressure on his space should have cleared a little!' In the meantime I worked hard at the parallel expositions of Carlyle and Emerson, especially of Emerson, whose great scheme of World-Thought was as we have seen, owing to the enigmatic form in which he had chosen

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to cast it, and in spite of his serene practical wisdom and splendid penetration and insight into life, still *caviare* to the general mind. But as the months came and went, and no sign of my article appeared in the magazine, I thought I would wait on the Editor and learn from himself what the difficulty was which was causing the delay. Accordingly one afternoon I appeared at his office in the city, my heart beating violently as was usual with me on such occasions. I was feeling indignant, and was prepared to be severe. But he was a man of infinite self-possession and quietness of manner, and after praying me to be seated he began so quietly and pleasantly and with such compliments to my article, went on so frankly and by such easy transitions to the difficulties of his office, and the pressure on his space from men of established reputation who could not well be refused; in a word, he so stroked me over and smoothed me down with his exquisite ingenuity and elaboration of phrase, that I began at last to consider myself the offender and him the martyr, and before I came away almost felt that I had made a sincere and disinterested friend! But once outside, I saw that all hope from Editors, in my then literary position, must be resigned; and I practically made up my mind to try them no more. And in this resolve I was finally fixed by a circumstance which occurred soon after. It must have been just about this time that 'Frazer's Magazine,' then on its last legs, passed into the editorial hands of the late Principal Tulloch prior to its final decease. As a mere off-chance I sent him the article on Spencer, with the feeling that as a theologian he would probably sympathize with my anti-materialistic point of view, and that as the new editor of a decrepit magazine he would probably give welcome in its pages to fresh points of view from young writers. The essay came back promptly however, but with a note which still charms me by its frankness and simplicity. It was just the article, he said, he should have liked to publish; my point of view was his own, and with most of my arguments he was in agreement, but having just undertaken the conduct of

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the Magazine he was obliged for the present 'to look out for big names and great reputations!' From that time I felt the game was up for me as a writer of philosophical articles for the monthly magazines; and that there was nothing for it now, unless I were to admit myself altogether beaten, but to collect the essays together and to test the opinion of the great general public by publishing them as a book. I finished up the essays on Carlyle and Emerson, and on a wintry morning in the December of 1879 I presented myself with a parcel under my arm at the house of a well-known publisher who had recommended himself to me some years before by going out of his way to read for me and give me his advice in reference to my first essay, before it appeared in pamphlet form. Having gone carefully through the two pamphlets and the MSS. of the three other essays, he candidly told me he did not think that in the then state of the market they would repay the expense of publication, and that in consequence he must decline bringing them out at his own risk, but that if I cared to pay the expenses of production he would be very glad to bring out the book. This was very straightforward I thought, and as hope was almost the only possession I still had left at the bottom of the basket, I determined to try my luck. The book, consisting of the five essays, and printed in the reverse order to that in which they were written, was brought out in the spring of 1880 under the title of the 'Religion of the Future'; and with it the first stage of my literary wanderings ends. In the following pages I shall recount as faithfully as I can, the ill-success that still pursued me for so many years as a writer of books; and shall endeavour to show how through sheer bad luck and bad management on my part, together perhaps with a greater amount of neglect than was altogether deserved on the part of reviewers, as well as the peculiar philosophic spirit and temper of the time which was the cause and justification of that neglect, I was so long an alien and an outcast from the literary fold.

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CHAPTER II.

CIVILIZATION.

HAVING found at last my lost Ideal, both in the Human Mind and in the constitution of the World, and having in my 'Religion of the Future' set forth in the most general way the directions in which it was to be looked for, I next turned to Human History, with the object of discovering whether the Ideal was also to be found in the actual progress of Civilization. Of this, however, I was by no means assured; for although you may convince yourself of the curve of the earth's surface by astronomical and other proof on the large scale, you may not be able to do it so easily by an acre to acre survey of a parish or county. But this I saw, that whether Civilization were steadily advancing and ascending (as, indeed, it would be if there were an Ideal behind it all) or whether it were only marking time, as it were, on the flat, could only be determined after we had discovered the connexion and interplay of the great factors of which it is composed—Religion, Government, Science, and Material and Social Conditions,—and had ascertained whether the net resultant of them all were an upward, a level, or a descending line; in the same way as an engineer can only determine what the gradient of a projected railway line will be, when he has reduced the irregular outline of the hills and valleys and plains through which it is to pass, to some definite mathematical line or curve. I saw, in

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a word, that as indispensable preliminary to the demonstration of the presence of the Ideal in the course of History, I must enter on an enquiry into the general Laws of Civilization. Now this problem of Civilization, although it lay in the natural line of evolution of my studies, was not taken up by me on any definite or predetermined plan; but arose in my mind when I was engaged on the essays on Carlyle, Emerson, and Herbert Spencer, which formed part of my 'Religion of the Future.' For in these writers I was confronted with two diametrically opposite views of society; Carlyle so conceiving it as to estimate the value and importance of all its arrangements from the point of view of Order; Emerson and Spencer, on the other hand, from the point of view of Expansion and Liberty. But to me their reasonings were all so much mere abstract speculation; what I wanted was to have the problem presented in such a shape that direct observation could be brought to bear on it, to have it brought down to particulars that is to say, or in other words, to persons, who should be the object-lessons in which the opposing principles could be seen imaged and reflected. And first of all I wanted to ascertain what effects the different forms of Government and the different social systems had on the march of civilization, before considering to what extent these effects, when unfavourable, could be neutralized or thwarted by the higher factors of Religion and Science; in the same way as one would begin by considering the effects of soil and temperature on the growth of plants, before proceeding to the higher and more complicated problems of intercrossing in their bearings on the characters of flower or fruit. And for this I was peculiarly and happily situated. I had been born and brought up in the extreme democracy of the Colonial backwoods; and on coming to England found myself cast into the midst of a society aristocratic to the core, but one where individual and personal liberty such as I had enjoyed in Canada, had from a long chain of historical causes, become as much respected as in a pure democracy. Nothing could have been

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more favourable for my attempt; for the problem had thus been cleared of all confusing complications, and reduced to the single question of the relative effects of Aristocracy and Democracy on the minds and morals of men. But just here I was somewhat hampered by my own personal bias, which went naturally and strongly in the direction of the *régime* under which I was born and brought up, a *régime* which had done so much for me personally, and which had so smoothed the way for me, that so far as my advancement was concerned, my outward situation and environment were as little a barrier to me, as if I had been born in the centre of an old civilization, or been heir to a Principality. For I had been, as the reader has seen, at the first Public School of the time, and at a University second to none, had I been able or disposed to appreciate its instructions; and I had always held precisely the position in the school, the playground, and the University which was my due so far as merit went, neither better nor worse; and there was no position to which I could not have attained, had I had the ability or the character to deserve it. I naturally looked askance therefore on a form of society where, as I imagined, invisible barriers of caste were erected at every turn, and where men were labelled and distributed in separate compartments like sheep in their pens; and I had not yet been long enough in the country to learn that in England society is not a close aristocracy as it is in Austria for example, but on the contrary is so happily blended with democratic elements, that in it more than in any mere democracy as such, culture and manners and their natural accompaniments will serve as the golden key to all that is best, most distinguished, and most refined. In order therefore to clear my mind of this personal bias of which I was only partially conscious at the time, and being determined that in my *rôle* of philosopher I would allow nothing to stand between me and the truth of which I was in search, I resolved on a course of first-hand observations of the effects of the aristocratic *régime* in all kinds of individual

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instances. I went everywhere, to country places remote from civilization, to the streets of large towns, to hotels, to theatres, to music halls, to debating societies, to the private houses of the different classes, to open-air meetings, to race meetings, to Exeter Hall meetings, to East and West-end sporting clubs, to political clubs; and everywhere I found that after making allowance for obscuring complications, the moral standards, the customs, the unwritten codes of honour, and the like, as accurately corresponded to the aristocratic conditions of life and society out of which they grew, as did the corresponding standards in Canada to the conditions of a democratic State. And so I had found what I most wanted, namely the *controlling* factor in civilization, the factor that is to say, which prevents society at any given point from flying away into the sky; which limits the activities of all the other factors; and is the cause why things make their own morality in spite of politician or priest; and so is everywhere the break on the wheel of Progress;—and this factor I found in what may be called the general Material and Social Conditions of the particular age and time. But on going on to enquire how the balance stood between Aristocracy and Democracy in their power to push on Civilization to higher and higher stages, I was hampered by a vast array and complication of considerations which detained me long and gave me much trouble to resolve; but in the long run I ended by perceiving as I have so often done in other lines of speculation, that what actually has occurred in the world on a large scale in any given epoch or period, was the best thing, the right thing, the thing wanted there; and that although Democracy would in a world destined to stand still and become stereotyped, give greater energy, range, and expansion to the spirit than Aristocracy, which confines its finer sense of personal dignity, its more refined culture and standard of manners, to the few; in a world intended to advance, and with Progress as its end and not stagnation, this need not be so, but on the contrary all

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forms of Government must be brought into requisition in turn according to the necessities of the place and hour, and the obstructions that have to be cleared away—now a military despotism, now a limited monarchy, here an aristocratic, there a democratic *régime*. I saw that for great political designs, the concentration of power in a single hand or in the hands of a few, may as in the Greek States of Antiquity be more important for the after civilization of the world than the personal liberties or moral expansion for the time being of innumerable masses of men. For just as in Nature the individual is always sacrificed to the necessities of the species, and the species of to-day to that which is to follow it to-morrow, and as this must be so if the world is to advance; so a whole generation of men may have to be sacrificed to the designs of a single great man, if his policy lies in the line of advancing civilization; and further, the effective support given to the great men who initiate fresh advances in every quarter of the field, may be as much cramped, it is important to observe, by a democracy, as the general expansion of the masses is in times of repose, by an aristocracy. For while in a *stationary* world, the expansion of the masses is the primary end; in a *progressive* world, it is equally or more important that the roads should be kept open for the free initiative of the original and seminal minds, so that they shall not be choked and blocked by dead masses of custom and hatred of change, as in close aristocracies, or by the apotheosis of the biggest acceptable notoriety, as where the tyranny of the majority prevails.

But at any rate Society as Carlyle saw is evolving, even if it is not advancing; and having found the *controlling* factor of civilization in the Material and Social Conditions of an age, I now had to determine the parts played by the *progressive* and *evolving* factors. But here too all was chaos; Religion, Science, and Government, each putting in its claim to priority. But after wandering about in this jungle for a while, I was

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greatly helped by the works of Comte which I now read for the first time. For in spite of his great reputation, I had been deterred as I have said from reading him, by the disparagement cast on his work by Spencer and Huxley, in whose writings the science of Comte was made to appear retrograde, and his classification of the sciences superficial and unsatisfactory. But happening to pass the rooms of the Positivist Society in Mortimer Street one Sunday evening when a lecture was being delivered by a distinguished member of that body, I went in out of curiosity; and was so interested in what I heard, that I at once procured a copy of Comte's 'Positive Philosophy,' and set eagerly to work upon it; keeping up my attendance the while at the lectures of the Society, in order to saturate myself as far as possible with the working spirit of his doctrines. And I was richly rewarded; for I had not gone far in my studies before I came on some large generalizations which opened out to me a broad road through the thicket in which I was entangled, and gave me the hint of a principle which seemed to me at once so central and commanding, that like the law of gravitation it had only to be judiciously applied, to reduce large masses of disconnected and recalcitrant facts to law and order. It was what I afterwards formulated as the 'Law of Wills and Causes'; and by its means I was enabled to draw a line of relation between Religion and Science, whereby the stage of evolution of the latter being given, the movement of the former could be foreseen. And from this I went on to work out the parts played by the other factors in their cross-relations to each other and to the whole; until at last, as result of it all, having got the Material and Social Conditions as the *controlling* or *limiting* factor, Science as the *progressive* factor, and Religion as the *conservative* and *harmonizing* factor; and Great Men everywhere as the instruments and initiators of advance; I felt that my general skeleton and outline of the progress of Civilization was sufficiently complete to justify me in working out the process

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in detail. I had already written a short summary of the movement as a magazine article; and this after being refused by the leading monthlies, was published in a magazine now defunct, called 'The Statesman,' of which a friend of mine had the control, but without any immediate result. It now stands as it was then written, as the last chapter in my book on Civilization; and after some four years or more spent in elaborating my theory in detail, and in which its relations to the systems of Hegel, Comte, Buckle, and Spencer were exhibited, and the whole brought into forms by means of the organon which I had introduced for the solution of the problems that arose in its course, it was published in the Spring of 1885 under the title of 'Civilization and Progress'; and now forms the first volume of the series which I afterwards systematically planned, and of which the 'History of Intellectual Development' is the latest instalment.

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CHAPTER III.

STYLE.

IN the meantime my little book 'The Religion of the Future' which contained in condensed outline the contribution which I had ventured to offer towards the solution of the World-problem, had fallen dead from the Press; and so far as I can remember no notice was anywhere taken of it for a year or more from the time of its appearance. But my friends of the pamphlet days stuck faithfully both by me and by it. One of them was in the habit of energetically recommending it in private; and another was good enough to take it under his arm, as he told me, to the office of a friend who was editor of one of the leading critical weekly reviews. But the editor in question who was very sensitive on the point of orthodoxy, had on looking it over, apparently not found it referable to any of the particular forms of heterodoxy with which he was in the habit of dealing, and not knowing precisely what to do with it or where to place it, had handed it over to one of his subordinates by whom it was relegated with a word or two of contemptuous comment to the small-print notices at the end of the paper. When I complained to my friend of the shabby treatment which the book had received, he suggested that I should try again but on a larger canvas, and with less concentration in the style, and more illustration and exposition; adding as he had formerly done of one of the essays contained in the book, that

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one could not expect much notice to be taken of a work in which a brand new theory of the World was presented to the reader in a couple of essays of twenty pages each! Now I was just starting to write my book on Civilization at the time, and this opinion of his gave me pause. 'He *is* right,' I said to myself as I speculated on the probable causes of the failure, 'it must be the style.' The matter of the book I felt to be right enough in its way, being, as we have seen in a former chapter, the normal evolution of preceding Thought when regard was had to the new difficulties of our time with respect to the existence of the Ideal, whether in the Mind or in the World. It could only have been its mode of presentation, I thought. Besides I had had my suspicions as to the style from the beginning. For before writing the first chapter on 'God or Force,' with the exception of letters to friends, I had not written a line in my life; and as I had always been very backward in composition at school, my one fear all along was that when I had got the ideas, I should not be able to express them. Indeed I had considered the enterprise so momentous that as the reader may remember, I had gone all the way to Scotland to undertake it! The consequence was that like a man trying to walk on the edge of a plank, I was so afraid of diverging a hairbreadth to the right or left of the straight path before me, that I had compressed and condensed and indrawn my exposition almost to obscurity. Not that I then felt this to be a fault to be avoided, in the same way as I should now; on the contrary in my youthful vanity I inwardly flattered myself that it looked rather distinguished than otherwise! For I was still largely under the dominion of Emerson; and had he not said that great Thinkers were in the habit of addressing each other like Olympian deities each from his several peak, quite careless as to whether vulgar mortals below understood them or not? And I secretly hoped that my own somewhat lordly and sententious manner in these essays might produce something of the same impression! But now that the ordinary reader would

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not buy the book, and the Olympians themselves had turned their backs on it; like a man who makes a joke at which nobody laughs, I began to wonder whether there was not something the matter; and whether in the new work on Civilization on which I was about to start, a little more expansion, elaboration and illustration, a little more accommodation to the difficulties of the general reader might not, as my friend had suggested, be an advantage. And in this good resolution I was doubtless strengthened by the refusal of the editors to have anything to do with my productions (a refusal, I argued, which meant that there must be something wrong somewhere), as well as by the remark of an American friend who on writing to me in reference to the book said that if he might be permitted 'to drop a thought' as he called it, he would suggest that in future books I should give more rein to fancy and invention, to the use of metaphor and pictorial illustration than in the last. This decided me; but on thinking over what he had said I could not see how, even had I been so disposed, the subject matter of my book on 'the Religion of the Future' could have admitted of any of these fine flowers of rhetoric and fancy. Who, for example, could become pathetic over 'the Scale in the Mind,' or aught but serious over the consequences of 'looking at the World with two microscopic an eye'! Still, I felt that he was right; and for some months my mind was entirely occupied with the consideration of the important question of style. I read copiously from the great Poets and Prose Writers, as much for the purpose of diagnosing the excellences and defects of each, as for imitating those I thought most praiseworthy. But as owing to some trouble connected with my eyes and head I was unable to read more than a few pages at a time, and these very slowly, and so had to have most of my reading done for me, I was obliged to depend almost entirely on the ear for detecting the subtler shades of distinction among them. I had the sentences read to me in an even, measured voice; and curiously enough I found that I could detect differences by the ear, which

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I was unable to detect by the sight. This was peculiarly marked, I remember, in reading the 'Spectator,' where the point was to distinguish by the style, which of the essays were written by Addison and which by Steele; for after having some dozen or more read aloud to me as specimens, I found myself able in many cases to assign each to its real author when read to me, but not when read by myself. There was something in the sight of the stops and periods and words which seemed to interfere with the purity and integrity of the total impression. And accordingly after having gone the round of the great writers in prose and verse in this way, and saturated myself with the spirit of their respective styles, I had come to certain conclusions on the subject of Style to which I still on the whole subscribe, and which it may not be altogether out of place perhaps, to briefly set down here.

In a general way I may say then, that I was of opinion that for Narrative admitting of a varied play of sentiment, emotion, and logical continuity, the style of the future except in those rare cases where the subject matter is of an unusually elevated character either in itself or by reason of its associations, as in 'Paradise Lost' for example, must if we are to avoid bombast, unreality, or insincerity, be Prose; but with such large indulgence and license in the matter of grammatical construction, as is usually accorded to verse. Indeed, except in lyrics, sonnets, and the like, to which the poetic form is peculiarly adapted, verse of all kinds has become barely tolerable; even blank verse in the absence of any theme elevated enough throughout to give it a sustained and continuous appropriateness, having become synonymous almost with bombast and unreality, and when men are left to their own initiative, being practically unread. Indeed, with the exception of the Elizabethan style of wit and humour, now happily out of date, it is the blank verse of Shakspeare when employed in the dead and prosaic passages of his historical dramas that is now most difficult to read; and were it not for

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his great name which has embalmed these passages, and for the impossibility of cutting them out without mutilating the plays in which they are found, they would long since have passed into oblivion. His prose on the other hand is in its way as admirable as his finest blank verse; and there is no form of literary excellence exhibited in the one, which does not appear in the other. Even in the greatest passages of his greatest plays where blank verse is used, it is noticeable that when he wants to get the fall necessary to bring out the full pathos or beauty of a situation, as for example in the deaths of Hamlet and Lear, the foreboding of Othello, or the soliloquy of Cleopatra on hearing of Anthony's death, he is obliged to break the line of his iambics;—and what is this but to desert his verse at the point where the sentiment of the moment can only find its full and perfect expression in a movement and form of words where no predetermined length of line intervenes between the author and his theme to violate the simplicity and integrity of his thought. And why not? If the elevation of the sentiment demands it, is there any reason why as much of a sentence or a paragraph as is necessary, should not assume the even, lofty tread of the iambic measure, and so the absurd necessity be avoided of cutting these iambics into lines of a given regulation length to begin with, and then violating the metre the moment the fall of the sentence requires it? It is only in the more loose, flexible, and sinuous movement of prose that you can get the freedom necessary to express the coarse and the refined, the bald and the elevated sentiments; always excepting of course lyrics and the rest, to which poetic rhythms are, as I have said, peculiarly appropriate.

So far I had gone in my reflections on Style, when I found that I could get no farther until I had settled to my own satisfaction in what it was that literary power really consisted; for if we consider it, if mere ingenuities of metre were the essence and not merely the appendage or accident of literary power, then indeed were those old writers who would do you

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anything from a sonnet to a philosophical treatise in metres cut in the shape of crosses, eggs, or yew-trees, greater than Shakspeare himself! And the conclusion at which I arrived was that the core and essence of literary power was pictorial power in the highest sense of that term. Not the power of building up an image by a mere linear addition of particulars, as one might the image of a room by the inventory of its contents in an auctioneer's catalogue; for although this in the form of the short sentence does indeed give us in the hands of Macaulay, for example, and notably in some of the great French writers, pictures of admirable clearness and vigour, still it is at best a comparatively cheap and easy achievement, a matter more of taste, labour, and time, than of genius, and consisting rather in analysis and dismemberment, as when the girl in the fairy tale had to separate out the different skeins of silk from the tangled ball, than in the compression and the constructive combination of words and images. Nor again does true pictorial power consist in a haphazard aggregate of high-sounding words; for this, as Macaulay said of Montgomery's poems. although having like a Turkish carpet all the colours necessary for a picture, may still present us with the image neither of anything in the heavens above nor in the earth beneath. Nor yet again does it consist in the dance and jingle of the words as in so much of the Minor Poetry of to-day; for this although a virtue in Music, can only be attained in any high degree in Literature by the sacrifice of that perfect clearness of the sentiment or thought which it is the first object of literature to convey. No, true pictorial power consists not in any or all of these, but in the power rather of bringing, as Emerson says of intellect generally, all the radiances and elusive lustres of the world to a unity, to a singleness and clearness of image at each and every point, as it were; as if the thoughts were to run from the point of a diamond pen fed by the mingled distillations of the subtlest essences in Nature as from a fountain. Now were this

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easy of accomplishment, we should all be Shakspeares; for it is in this and in this alone that his purely literary as distinct from his general intellectual and dramatic power really consists. And yet so important is it that the lighter forms of poetry at least, should be enriched by new and lovely combinations of rhythms and metres, that just as in the breeding of animals where a total harmony and perfection is aimed at, the smallest approach to the ideal in a feature in itself unimportant, as in the form of the ear or tail, is seized on with avidity by the fancier and loaded with prizes and honours far above its intrinsic worth, until its beauties are embodied in the breed; so new felicities of rhyme and rhythm, even when quite divorced from the sentiments or thoughts they are intended to express, may for a time be accorded such importance and prominence by the critics, as to quite deflect the very conception of literary power from its true nature. And hence it is that purely literary eminence (apart from lyric gift which all would admit) is conferred for a time on such writers as Swinburne and Rossetti for example, who give us complex and charming word-orchestration without real images; or on prose writers like Meredith, who has truth and thought indeed, but so little pictorial power that to recover his meaning from out the wrecks of his expression, costs as much labour as it would to recover the image of a ship from its splintered and stranded yards and beams. For it cannot be overlooked, that just as an art is enriched and raised to a higher power when it borrows the *fringe*, as it were, of another art, as when Literature borrows the movement and fall of Music to help it out in the clearness and distinctness of the thought or sentiment it wishes to express; but is impoverished when the entire *body* of the one is substituted for the other, as for example when the accurate images of painting are attempted to be transferred to music, or the impressionism of Music to Painting; so it is to wrench Literature from its true purpose, when the peculiar methods of Music are substituted bodily for its own, or when great unhewn

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boulders of wit or wisdom are flung pell-mell into it without expression, proportion, or form. But this confusion in literary criticism must continue, I presume, until writers shall arise who combining in themselves the various excellences of thought, expression, and form in their right proportions, shall bring Literature back to its true model again; after which the canonization of these one-sided excellences (their *ad interim* function being over,) must decline and finally cease.

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CHAPTER IV.

A POLITICAL INSTANCE.

IT was during these years that Lord Randolph Churchill appeared as a portent in the political sky, disturbing the minds of men like a comet, but giving me just the object-lesson I was looking for, to enable me to resolve certain difficulties and perplexities connected with Politics on which my mind at the time was working, but on which I had not been able to come to any very definite conclusion. On one or two points of general consideration I had reached a certain degree of clearness and conviction. I saw for example that if the world was destined to a continuous progress in civilization, its Genius or Presiding Spirit was not going to make its way to that end by such means only as should receive the *imprimatur* either of a knot of 'superior persons,' a plebiscite of the masses, a *consensus* of debating societies, or even a vote of the House of Commons, any more than it is going to 'run' the Universe itself on the few cut-and-dried mechanical or spiritual lines of Spencer or Hegel; but that it will find its way to its end, as it does to the cross-fertilization of flowers, by the most unexpected methods, and by a greater complexity and ingenuity than is likely to be foreseen by any single mind or combination of minds; and further, that it will if necessary resort again to the old weapons of despotism and the guillotine, with as much *sang-froid* and indifference as it will to the propaganda of

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Exeter Hall and the Peace Society. I saw too that if Society were to be arrested and stereotyped at any given point, and no provision were intended to be made for a further advance, the Democratic form of Government, which aims at giving each man his 'fowl in his pot,' his 'three acres and a cow,' or what not, and which affords ample room for each individual to expand and spread himself out to the limit of his nature and powers, whether he be cabbage or flowering aloe, must be our ideal; but that where on the contrary, room has to be made for further advance, where complications loom ahead dark and menacing, and where nations are everywhere encompassed with the chances and dangers of war, then no mere democratic form of government as such can prevent an effective autocracy from being concealed *somewhere*, if not inside the Constitution, then outside of it; as was seen in America in the days of Lincoln, and is still to be seen in France since her war with Germany. All this I saw, but what I could not resolve to my satisfaction, was the form of government and society which is best adapted to meet the ends both of a stationary and a progressive state, both of present and of future material and spiritual well-being, in States not like France or Russia or Austria encompassed with the chances of war, but in States like England and America which have no immediate fears from hostile neighbours. On the one hand I saw that so far as England, for example, was an aristocracy, there was a tendency to prevent the expansion of the great masses of the people not admitted to its privileges; while in so far on the other hand as it was a democracy there was always the fear of the demagogue, who by echoing the wants rather than the true interests of the people, like parents who encourage their children to eat up all their cake to-day and so leave none for to-morrow, would beguile them into drawing on the capital required for future progress, as well as on the interest and heritage of the past; and I was inclined to think that if an Aristocracy could by severely winnowing out false reputations prevent this, it would

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have gone a long way towards neutralizing its own drawbacks. Great therefore was my surprise, great my curiosity, and greater still my indignation and disgust, when I found an old aristocracy like England adding to its own particular vice of repressing the energies and expansion of the masses (as Matthew Arnold was so fond of pointing out), the peculiar vice and curse of democracies in all ages, the vice namely of giving encouragement to the Demagogue, as seen in the part it played in the rise to power of Lord Randolph Churchill.

Now on looking about for some solid footing on which to stand in approaching these political problems, I had made a particular point of observing what may be called the rise of reputations, in the belief that if I could convince myself that democracies could manage always to place their best men at the head of affairs, they had nothing to fear in their rivalry with aristocracies or despotisms. And once entered on this study of the rise of reputations in its bearing on Politics, it was not long before it had extended itself to the rise of reputations in every department of life. And many of the results at which I had arrived were to me most interesting. In watching the rise of literary reputations, for example, I had come to the conclusion that just as no social reputation can be said to be firmly established until it has received the *imprimatur* of the Court, so no literary reputation can be said to have fully emerged so as to be reckoned with as a power in moulding the opinions of men, until it has received the *imprimatur* of the Daily or Weekly Press. Carlyle it may be remembered complained bitterly that after preaching to deaf ears for forty years, a trifling address of his to the Edinburgh Students, which happened to be reported in the Press, and in which he enunciated no idea which he had not reiterated *ad nauseam* for a life-time, gave him more reputation than all his books; and for the first time in their married life made his wife feel that she could now present him to her friends and say, 'You see I have married a success after all!' I saw

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further that with the exception perhaps of certain close scientific societies, there was little chance of a man receiving the recognition of his own intellectual *confrères* until he had first attained the honour of recognition by the Press, and still further that when once the light-skirmishers of literature had got the ear of the Press by their prominence on the Railway Stalls, they would soon find their way into the most sacred and closely-barred haunts of the elect in club-land and elsewhere, and would push the older and more orthodox literary reputations from their stools. All this of the value of Press recognition and advertisement had long been a commonplace in professional and commercial circles, but literary distinctions were still believed to be quite beyond its reach; and it was amusing to note the *naïveté* with which those whose own reputations could be palpably traced to the time when some trifling incident had brought them into publicity, would calmly assume that if you could only succeed in convincing *them* of your merits, your own reputation would be at once assured! One of the most interesting phenomena in connection with reputations thus made by publicity, was the length of time it took to bring them down to their natural level again. A theologian, for example, who should succeed in raising a controversy in the Church, which should get into the Law Courts and the Press, might count on a popularity and reputation of a decade or two before he came down to his natural position again; while one who should sufficiently frighten the public by his predictions of an immediately approaching Millennium, would become so dilated in bulk and proportion in consequence, that his professional brethren would step aside to make way for him as he passed. A preacher whose rising popularity would fill a good-sized chapel, would if some one were unfortunate enough to be killed in the crush, and it got into the papers, be able ever after to fill the Colosseum of Rome itself! An actor who could throw a bone of contention among the critics over which they could wrangle in the Press,

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might be assured of a continued popularity of a generation or more, while other actors of equal promise perhaps, but who had not got the ear of the Press in time, would, like the man at the Pool of Bethesda, grow old waiting in the outer courts for their chance. In politics the man who should get the start of his colleagues by going on the grand tour through the country, agitating some popular cause, the details of which should be reported from day to day in the Press, would by that fact alone have by the time of his return so distanced all those who were his equals when he set out, that they would not dream of disputing the palm with him, and his position as leader would be from that time unshaken. A young poet whose work had lain for ten or fifteen years neglected, had the good fortune to be 'discovered' by an author who had the penetration to know a good piece of work when he saw it, and the courage to say so, and who immediately devoted a whole article to him in one of the Monthly Reviews. From that time the reputation of the poet was made. At one time a word or two of commendation from Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright happening to get into the Press, was enough to make the reputation of a poet or a novelist. In many cases the individuals in question were really worthy of all praise, and the incidents associated with their rise only served to give them their proper chance, but that was an accident of the situation merely, not its essence, and as often as not, the recipients of the popularity were 'wind-bags' only, of the cheapest order.

Now it was while I was amusing myself with watching the careers of these Press-made reputations, and was arguing ominously for the future of Democracy from them, that Lord Randolph Churchill appeared on the scene, and presented such an object-lesson to the political thinker, that I felt it ought not to be allowed to pass without some comment to point its moral. His career was more than usually interesting to me, inasmuch as it illustrated a somewhat different relation between the Press and the Public than the one I have just described. In a

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general way the Press, as we have seen, gives the signal which the Public accepts in good faith; and when the Press begins to flag in its recognition, the Public flags also. But in the case of Lord Randolph Churchill, when the Press had unconsciously hypnotized the Public, it could not undo the spell, and the Public then turned round and coerced the Press. The fact was that the Press in this matter of the rise of Lord Randolph was quite taken off its guard. For in heedlessly recording his vagaries every morning for the amusement of its readers at their breakfast tables, and in placarding his name in large type on its signboards over the length and breadth of the land, it did not dream that it was hypnotizing a large section of the public as completely as if it had packed them in a room together and made them fix their eyes as a mesmerist would, on a dazzling light or a continuously revolving ball or wheel; much less did it dream that in this way it was fastening him as securely on its own neck and on that of his party, as the Girondins of the French Revolution did Robespierre, when, relying on their own strength in the Convention, they placed him on the Committee of Public Safety. For during all the early years of his rise, it may be remembered, the idea of his ever becoming a serious force in politics, or other than a mere 'Political Puck,' as they called him, for the diverson of the House, was received with derison by the serious politicians both of the Press and the Party whenever it was mentioned. But coming fresh from my observations on the rise of reputations, I thought differently; and in the chapter on 'the Demagogue' in my book on Civilization, pointed to him as one who was likely to go far. For a large section of the public were by this time fast becoming hypnotized, and when at last they were fully under the spell, they turned round and coerced the Press, which by this time had awakened to its mistake and was showing signs of revolting. But the mischief was done; and between the two, Lord Randolph who had been watching his opportunity the while, coolly walked into power; the old watch-

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dogs of Literature, who were in the habit of coming out of their caves periodically to air their utopias or grievances, having apparently gone to sleep with the rest. It was a strange story, and when Lord Randolph had arrived at last at his goal as Leader of the House of Commons, and quietly picking the 'precious diadem off the shelf, had put it in his pocket,' all that was left the sensible men of the Party before bowing their necks to the yoke, was to protest and vituperate; the leading organ of the Party in the Press on the day of his ascendancy ordering him to begone as an impostor who had no more real knowledge of politics than an overgrown schoolboy, and was too ignorant to know the full depths of his own ignorance! But this was superfluous, for it was not long after, that he ruined himself by his want of judgment, and so deceased from the political stage; re-appearing in after years, surrounded with all the halo of romance, but leaving me with a fear of the demagogue not only in democracies but in aristocracies also, which I have not been able to banish from my mind.

I had no personal dislike to Lord Randolph Churchill, and although I felt his want of personal pride to be no virtue, I was nevertheless secretly delighted with his directness of mind and his absence of conventional political cant; what I could not bear was that it should be possible for any man to rise to power by vulgar vituperation and abuse, and by these alone. But it was an object-lesson in politics which was not likely soon to recur in quite the same form, and I took advantage of it to write a little book on the subject, entitled 'Lord Randolph Churchill, a study of English Democracy.' I had the greatest difficulty in finding a publisher to bring out the book on any terms, and when at last it did appear, an ominous silence as of death fell upon it, and oblivion soon gathered it to itself. It was written when Lord Randolph was in the heyday of power and prosperity, but owing to the difficulty of finding a publisher, it did not appear, much to my regret, until after his fall from power. And now that the grave has closed

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over him also, and he has become a name of romance merely to the younger minds; when I think of the harm my book did me at the time, the unkindest cut of all is when some old-fashioned politician who remembers the incidents of those years writes to me to say that of all the books I have written, it was the one calculated to do the greatest amount of practical good.

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CHAPTER V.

THE DAEMONIC ELEMENT.

IN the meantime my book 'Civilization and Progress' had followed in the wake of my little books on the 'Religion of the Future' and 'Lord Randolph Churchill,' and had gone to the grave with them. But after lying unsold on the publishers' shelves for more than three years, it was brought to life again, contrary to all the traditions of the trade, by a series of vicissitudes which in the history of books sounds like a romance. From its very inception and birth, what Goethe calls the 'daemonic element,' or that power in Nature which causes the 'best laid schemes of men and mice to go so oft aglee,' seems to have presided over its fortunes and to have intervened at every turn to prevent its success. And if I may without incurring the imputation of taking either myself or it too seriously, be permitted to give the reader a short outline of its history, it may serve as a stimulus to younger writers not to despair when things seem at their worst, but to treat this same 'daemonic element' with the indifference or contempt it deserves. The book carried, as I have said, an ominous shadow with it from its birth. The first publisher to whom it was submitted, rejected it because it contained, as he said, too many original ideas to be a success! A strange reason, I thought; and I could not help suspecting it was meant ironically; but on writing to him further on the point he told

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me quite frankly that it was so, and that it would tell against its success with the public. Now although I was greatly perplexed and disturbed by its rejection on this ground, still that it should be hailed as an original work at all, even if to its detriment, seemed to me too good to be true; and I felt not a little jubilant at that aspect of the matter. But not to be published on that account! What could that mean? and how was I to meet this new complexion put on literary work? when I suddenly bethought me that a work might be original without on that account being of much value, and then my complacency abated somewhat, and I was left almost in despair. I had spent four years in writing the book, and eight or ten in collecting materials for it and thinking it out, and then for it to be rejected, and because it was too original! Well, there was nothing for it but to print it myself at my own expense, and to take chances of the public taste. But do what I would something always intervened to prevent the public getting the chance of appraising it. The first mischance was due to my own stupidity; for I had, to save expense, had it printed on paper, poor, thin, and blue, thus reducing its size to less than half what it ought to have been to sustain the gravity and importance of its title. Then again I had provided it with neither preface, index, nor table of contents; and had withal encumbered it with a sub-title so momentous that it would have taken volumes to have done it justice, being nothing less than 'the outlines of a new system of political, religious, and social philosophy!' Now this at the best of times and under the most favourable circumstances would have been a serious undertaking for the ordinary reader; but on the title-page of a book with such a meagre and poverty-stricken appearance as this—it was enough to damn it on the threshold. And so it was not surprising that the first public mention of it should have been in the 'Spectator' under the heading of 'Books Received,' at the very end of that periodical. At first I was delighted at this, thinking that it meant that the book had

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been specially marked out for the honour of a review, and as I hoped an early one; whereas it meant only, as I afterwards learned, that this was but a last farewell to it before passing it onward to oblivion. And after waiting long and impatiently to see what the reviewer would have to say about it, and no review appearing, I became quite downhearted; I felt that I had mismanaged the whole thing, and could not be surprised at the result; but as that was not now to be remedied, I resolved that I would again send copies to a few men of the highest eminence in philosophy, theology, science, and history, men whom I thought most capable of judging the work, and who would not be under the dominion of appearances. I was just about carrying this resolution into effect, when a letter arrived from a gentleman on the staff of one of the evening papers, asking me if I had written any other works, and if so, would I give him their names, adding that he had just written a review for the said paper, but that his editor had refused to insert it, because it was too long and too eulogistic. He had given it a whole column when the editor expected only a short paragraph; the 'daemonic' had intervened again, and I was once more thrown back on my own resources. I then sent out the copies to the eminent men above mentioned,—'the thirty-nine,' as I used to call them, from a strict audit I had made of their number—with a letter to each in stereotyped phrase, explaining what I had attempted to do in the book, and indicating the new positions which I had taken up. In every instance without exception, if I remember rightly, the book was kindly and courteously acknowledged; and to my great joy three or four of the number promised to give it reviews in the various periodicals to which they had access. It is going to emerge at last, I thought to myself; and yet not without a shade of misgiving, for I was beginning to be suspicious of my old friend 'the daemonic' and was not disposed to be so simple and trustful as formerly. I was justified in my suspicion, for no reviews appeared. The first of 'the thirty-

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nine' had written asking if he might review the book in an evening paper, but the Editor was on the Continent at the time and nothing more was heard of it. The second started on the review, as I afterwards learned from him, but he found on going into it that it would require an article to do justice to the points of controversy raised, rather than the column merely which was at his disposal, and so it too fell through. The third, a friend of mine, wrote to me to say that he had just arranged with the Editor of a philosophical magazine to give it a long review of from ten to fifteen pages. I was delighted, and really thought I was now assured of a review at last. But next day he received a note from the Editor saying that on reconsidering it he found he could not allow him more than four pages; and this my friend declined, on the plea that he could not even break ground on the subject in that space. By this time I had grown almost desperate with the tension of these repeated hopes and disappointments; I would have welcomed a single page, half a page, or indeed even a foot-note!—and could have kicked my friend!

A year had now elapsed since the book appeared, and no notice had been taken of it in any of the leading periodicals, or indeed at all, with the exception of a short notice in the 'Scottish Review,' a longer one in the 'Inquirer,' and two or three lines in one of the popular 'Monthlies' intimating that the book was so full of bombast, that without detriment to the reader it might safely be ignored. 'It is all that starchy-blue paper, and want of index!' I said to myself, and prepared to resign myself to the inevitable. And then one of the literary friends who had stuck to me throughout, suggested that I should send a second copy of the book to the Editor of the 'Spectator' with a note. I did so in a half-hearted, half-desperate kind of way, explaining that it had cost me many years of labour, and after expressing my disgust at having to hawk it about *in formâ pauperis* in this way, asked him if he would do me the favour to glance into it himself, adding that

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if he then still felt it unworthy of a notice, I would gladly abide by his decision. Not many days elapsed before I had a note from him expressing his sympathy with my disgust, and regret at his own oversight, and informing me that he had done the best he could for it. In the following number of the 'Spectator' the review appeared, but although highly appreciative in general, it was hostile to nearly all my special positions in detail, which, indeed, I was prepared for from the Editor's well-known views; and more than all (and here was where the 'daemonic' again came in) he misunderstood my drift in the most unaccountable way in just those passages where I counted on his full support,—in that part of my chapter on 'First Principles' namely, where I show that there are six distinct principles that must be *believed* although they cannot be scientifically *known*. Now this as the reader will have seen from a former chapter, was one of my contributions to the solution of the World-problem, but by reading it as if I meant by *belief* something *less* than knowledge, whereas I palpably meant by it something deeper than all mere knowledge properly so called, as on it all knowledge ultimately rests, he gave such a twist to my argument as to completely stultify its character, and so neutralized all the good the review was calculated to do me. 'Sheer bad luck again!' I said to myself, and now at last I made up my mind that the 'daemonic' and Fate together were too much for me!

And then followed an interval of two years in which no more was heard of the book; the entire edition with the exception of the Press-copies, a few casual sales, and the copies sent to 'the thirty-nine,' slumbering peacefully the while in the publishers' vaults; when suddenly one morning I received a letter from the late Mrs. Lynn Linton telling me that she had read the book and had heard that it had fallen flat; but that something must be done to revive it; would I call and see her to talk the matter over? Her plan was that I should bring out a cheap edition of the copies in the publishers' hands; have

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them new-bound; a preface, index, and table of contents added; and the price reduced from fourteen shillings to five. The publishers who also thought that something ought to be done to revive the work if possible, agreed to the project but could hold out little hope that the reduction of the price would really make it a success, as it was contrary to the traditions of the trade that a book of that nature once fallen dead could ever be revived. I resolved to give the project a chance, however, and the cheap edition with highly complimentary extracts from the 'Spectator,' 'the Inquirer,' and the 'Scottish Review,' as well as a personal notice from Mrs. Lynn Linton herself, all framed into an imposing advertisement, or 'signboard' as I used to call it, appeared in due course in the Spring of 1888. But here my old enemy was again lurking around the corner for me. For one of 'the thirty-nine' who on the re-emergence of the book had written a eulogistic review in one of the evening papers, found to his surprise after he had sent a copy of the proof to me, that the subordinate in charge of the reviews, had when the Editor was away from home, struck out almost every word of praise, so that when the review appeared it was so colourless and insipid as to be barely complimentary. Dashed again! But not to be outflanked by the enemy in this way, I asked permission of the writer of the review in question, to use the parts struck out, as a personal notice in his own name; and to this he assented. As he was on the staff of the paper, and had never before had his contributions overhauled by the editor, the whole thing, he said, was to him quite incomprehensible. To me it was clear enough;—the 'daemonic' again!

The success of the project, however, was immediate and decisive. The book in its cheap edition with its cover changed from a dark blue to a chocolate brown, with preface, index, and table of contents added, and its size stuffed out to respectable proportions by the insertion of the publishers' catalogue at the back, now presented outwardly at least a most respectable appearance; and in little more than a year the

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whole edition of nearly a thousand copies was sold out. But new difficulties immediately arose in the wake of the former. The last copy of the book was sold out while the run on it was at its height, but it had not been stereotyped; and the publishers could neither advise the price of a new edition being suddenly raised, nor could they see how the type of so large a work could be set up again so as to be made to pay at five shillings. There was nothing for it therefore, they said, but to let it go out of print altogether for a time, in the hope that if the interest in it still continued, secondhand copies would rise in value and be marked 'scarce' in the publishers' catalogues, and that then, if they rose sufficiently high, we might be justified in bringing out a new edition in better style at the original price of fourteen shillings. They proved right in their forecast; the second-hand copies rose so high that I had myself to pay ten shillings for one for my own special use; and I was then advised by the publishers that the time was ripe for a new edition. And so, after being out of print for three years and a half, the book was in the end of 1892, and eight years after its first appearance, again printed in the form and style in which it now stands; its success after such history and fortunes, making a kind of record in the history of literature.

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CHAPTER VI.

POLITICAL ECONOMY.

SCARCELY had 'Civilization and Progress' gone out of print, when a suggestion was made me by my publishers that I should write them a book on the Social Problem, including under that term Political Economy, the Problem of Capital and Labour, and those other allied problems which the Social Democratic movement of the time had stirred into new life and activity. To this proposal which rather surprised me by the confidence which it seemed to imply in me at a time when my other works had been so unfortunate, I assented with hesitation, as feeling that I had neither the knowledge requisite for the enterprise, nor had I given that amount of thought to the subject which was necessary to do it justice. But having at last agreed to undertake it, with the proviso that I should be allowed to drop it if I found I could throw no new light on its problems, I set to work on it with all the industry I could command; and during the year or more in which I was engaged on it, I read or had read to me some ninety odd volumes on the subject, English and Foreign, beginning with Adam Smith. And of these ninety it may be interesting in passing to remark that with the exception of a few statistical works, what with the repetitions of each other, or trivial variations from each other, and what with exploded theories that no longer need claim the reader's attention, they

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might for practical purposes all be thinned down to not more than a dozen or so. The rest, for any good they were ever likely to do anyone, might as well have been allowed to sleep on their dusty shelves. The few writers on whom I found it necessary to concentrate, either as giving some fresh turn to the subject or as treating its doctrines from some new and original point of view, were (beginning with Adam Smith), Ricardo, Mill, Jevons, Ruskin, Karl Marx, Henry George, Boehm-Bawerk, Gunton, Mummery and Hobson, and Mallock. And these once mastered, I felt that all the points of view necessary to be kept in mind before one could venture to enter on a new construction of one's own, had been taken, and accordingly, after ruling the others out of my purview except in so far as I bore away a general impression of them in my memory, I concentrated on these alone.

Adam Smith, I found altogether charming. His delightful excursions and leisurely meanderings over nearly every quarter of the field, the large amorphous mass of pregnant suggestion and firsthand observation with which his work abounds, his uniform commonsense, together with the number of isolated remarks which can be culled from his writings to support almost each and every School into which the Science has since differentiated itself, made him most nutritive reading, and a delight to return to even to-day. But the landscape of Political Economy was almost a virgin forest when he set out to clear it, and although he went over the greater part of the ground since more systematically explored, still at the end of his labours wide tracts of territory remained swampy and only partially reclaimed, and it was reserved for Ricardo mainly, and after him Mill and later members of the School like Cairns and Marshall, to drain the diffused and somewhat undefined doctrines of Smith into certain large clean-cut generalizations which afterwards formed the staple of what is known as the Orthodox Political Economy; and in which the Science for a generation or more was believed to have received its

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Apocalypse, and the volume of its Scriptures to have been closed against appeal. There was first the doctrine of the 'Economic Man' as he was called, a mere melodramatic, stage villain, a creature like that Doctor in the Arabian Tale, of whom Carlyle speaks, whose head when placed in a bucket of water would go on grinding out hypotheses for ever, without shadow of a heart. The doctrines which emanated from this 'Economic Man,' and of which he was the soul and inspiration —the Law of Population, of the Wages-Fund, of Wages paid out of Capital, and the rest,—although as dead and mechanical as the pieces on a chess-board, still had their different parts to play, and were bound by Mill and his followers into a complete and in their way harmonious whole.

On them followed Jevons, with his new departure transferring the problem of Supply and Demand from a movement of gross quantities of dead matter moving like goods in a railway train from one point of the compass to another, (and which had to balance themselves somehow like the sides of an accountant's ledger), to a finer *internal* calculus of human motives, which had as its fixed point what he called the 'marginal utility' of things, or that point at which a further rise of price would destroy all inducement to buy; in the same way, for example, as a man might give a fortune for a loaf of bread when he was starving, but not a sou for a second loaf the moment after; and so affiliated his theory of value in a way with the theory of Rent of the older School, which also took as its fixed point, the cost at which produce could be raised on land on the 'margin of cultivation' as it is called, that is to say at the point where the return is such as will no more than repay the outlay on it at the ordinary profits on capital.

It was while these modifications were being made in the older doctrines of the Science, that Ruskin deserting for a moment the studies of a life-time, entered the lists with characteristic enthusiasm, like a knight-errant on a forlorn hope; and buckled on his armour in defence of the doctrines of his master, Carlyle,

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against the pretensions of the reigning School. Like Carlyle, his great aim was to *moralise* the relations of industry, now given up, as he figured it, to the godless, inhuman traffic of 'supply and demand,' where the bodies and souls of men have little value or much according to the state of the market, and men with 'the Devil take the hindmost,' as their motto, scalp one another like Choctaws. His endeavour was to find some reasonable relation between a man's pay and the work he performs, independently of what happens to be the market-supply of the place or hour, and some approximate standard of *fixed* remuneration, either in money, consideration, or repute, which shall express that relation; and he drew me up suddenly by asking the pregnant question:—Why if two men present themselves at your factory gate for a job, you will give the one you select, say sixpence an hour, when had he come alone you would have given him, say ninepence?—as if a man's remuneration were to depend not on the work he did, but on the numbers who happened to want to do the work! Now I had not thought of that way of looking at it before, and it sank deeply into my mind at the time,—and I have never felt quite the same in regard to these matters since.

These views of Carlyle and Ruskin prepared me for the Socialism of Karl Marx, who was the next Economist I had set down for serious study. I found, however, that his doctrines of 'surplus labour,' of 'socially necessary labour-time,' and the rest, were as much the abstractions of a mere hocus-pocus of logic-chopping on the one hand, as the old 'wage-fund,' 'wages drawn from capital' shibboleths of the Orthodox School, were on the other; and that his doctrine of remuneration by *time* alone, was as much invented to justify the yokel who used the spade, in demanding the same remuneration as the inventor who in an equal time, perhaps, had added new aids to civilization and comforts to life, as the old 'Wages drawn from Capital' theory was, to justify the capitalists in their exploitations. And as I had already seen

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a whole generation of men led by the nose by these old academic formulas about 'capital and labour,' the 'wage-fund,' 'supply and demand,' and the like, in the teeth of the gluts and starvation which existed side by side and stalked one another over the field like ghouls; as I had seen them so hypnotized by these phrases and formulas passed before their eyes, that none was left wide enough awake to protest, save Carlyle; and as I had not yet recovered my self-respect for being myself so cheaply taken in; it was not likely that I was going to fall a victim to these catch-words of Marx, which I saw to be as hollow and as unsubstantial as the rest.

It was while I was standing thus perplexed, that Henry George appeared on the horizon like a Prophet of old, and impressed me as he had done so many others, by his moral fervour and elevation, his transparent truthfulness and simplicity, his clean-cut thinking, and his clear and beautiful style; and was the first to so shake the boughs of the Old Economy, that its pinched and weather-beaten fruits still clinging to the tree long beyond their date, were shaken to the ground. And although they still continue their existence in the old Academic haunts, long after their life has departed, and are even yet arguable as elements of some larger conception, they can never again be sacred and authoritative as of yore. And I have often thought that had George at that time been able to have gone farther, and to have united his forces with those of Marx on the question of Capital and Interest as well as on that of Land, their united camp, in the then state of political and social ferment among the masses, would have gone far. But by splitting with Marx on this question of Interest on Capital,—George representing it as a product as natural and legitimate as wages, and the Capitalist as a necessary and justifiable factor in Industry, as much so, indeed, as the Working-Man himself; while Marx regarded not only Interest, but the 'Wages of Superintendence' (as the share falling to the Capitalist was called), as a piece of exploitation and robbery pure and

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unredeemed, — the two movements neutralized each other, and lost, in consequence, much of their authority with those interested in their respective schemes. And when men began to realize that while George would have expropriated the Landowners without mercy, he would have still permitted the Fund-holders, the Company-promoters, the fraudulent Directors, the Sleeping-partners and other Rip van Winkles of trade, to pile up their money-bags in their vaults without let or hindrance, they saw that there must be a huge fallacy lurking somewhere in these prophetic strains, and one which it was now no longer worth their trouble to explore. In the meantime while rejecting George's practical proposals, I had become so enamoured of his theory of Interest that after pondering it for some time and coming to it from various angles and points of view, I was finally inclined to accept it. This doctrine, I may remark in passing, was based on the element of Time; and ran to the effect that as all things having value can be turned into money, and money, again, into seed-corn or fruit-trees or timber-forests, and as these, again, yield an increase when planted, quite independently of human exertion and depending entirely on the element of Time, there is no reason why the money that was borrowed to pay for them should not also have its share in that increase; and that share is what we call Interest. Now this certainly looked feasible, and I was inclined to adopt it, as I have said, when Boehm-Bawerk's book on 'Capital and Interest,' with its comprehensive survey of all the various theories on the subject of Interest that have appeared in the world, fell into my hands. And there among the rest was George's theory, which had been put forward by a German Economist named Strasburger, but which was now encompassed by such a wilderness of alternative hypotheses, and so swilled and washed on all hands by a sea of hostile criticism, that I no longer felt so sure of its truth and stability as formerly; and I put it aside for the time for more mature consideration and for further light.

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By this time, however, I was beginning to feel that I had almost all the threads of the subject in my hands, and that I was now ready to attempt some reconstruction of the Science on my own account; and the point, I remember, on which I pitched as the centre from which all the older fallacies of the Science had arisen, and as the rock on which they had split, and from which I intended to work outwards until if possible I should find the fallacy, was the phenomenon of 'gluts'—gluts of shirts in warehouses, with bare backs in the streets, which they could not reach, gluts of wheat in granaries and of bread in bakeries, with men and women starving at the doors. And I was beginning vaguely to see that the difficulty must lie somewhere in the relation of the distribution of products to their production, and that the doctrine of the Orthodox School, with its tendency to sacrifice everything to Production, and to let Distribution take care of itself, would have to be replaced by some doctrine in which Distribution should be given the first place, with Production as sequence or concomitant; when a little book on the subject by Gunton, an American author, the title of which I have now forgotten, convinced me by the number and pregnancy of its first-hand observations on the subject, that I was right in my surmise, and that the wheels of industry and prosperity can only be kept going, when wages are high enough to carry off the products of industry as fast as they are produced. And it was not long before my table was littered with diagrams in which I was trying to picture to myself how the old economic doctrines would have to be modified to fit them into a scheme in which Distribution and not Production should be the centre and mainspring around which all the wheels of industry revolved, when the little book by Mummery and Hobson on 'the Physiology of Industry,' fell in my way, and by doing for me once and for all, with masterly insight and power, all that I had been so lamely and with so much labour attempting to do for myself, took the problem for the time being quite out of my hands. These fine

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Economists, I felt at once, had begun with the right method and at the right end. They saw that before you could put your finger on the disease from which Industry was suffering, you must have, to begin with, a clear image of its *normal* processes,—of Industry in a state of health, as it were,—the processes, namely, by which the raw materials of wealth are culled and collected from the wide domains of Nature, and passed through the various processes of manufacture and retail, until by exchange or otherwise they are returned in other forms to the people through whose hands they have just passed, and who have been employed in their production, manufacture, or exchange; and in such quantities and by a mechanism so self-adjusting, that there shall be no block or stoppage at any point in the transit, but that on the contrary, the whole shall continue to circulate in an endless wheel, as it were, from the producer to the consumer and back again; in the same way as in a healthy body the food taken in by the mouth is passed through the various organs and processes of change and manufacture, until it reaches the ultimate cells and tissues of bone and muscle which it has to renovate and nourish; and in such form and quantity that the organism shall be kept at that point of efficiency where it can continue working to produce the food which it has again to send on this continuous round of change. The authors next with masterly penetration, and an intimate knowledge of the subject to which I could lay no claim, put their finger on the real cause of the trouble, as the first step towards remedying it. They showed that just as when Production was believed to be the vital factor in Industry, *saving* on the part of Capitalists and of Society, was the master virtue, so when free Distribution is made the vital factor, *spending* on the part of Capitalists, in its economic form of high wages, is the remedy needed to keep the wheels of industry agoing, or to start them again when they have become clogged. The demonstration as an abstract statement seemed to me complete; and on the strictly economic

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aspect of the question I felt I had really nothing more to add. And when shortly afterwards, Mallock brought out the book in which he demonstrated, incontestably I think, against the Socialists, how much larger a proportion of the wealth of the world is due to brains than to hands, I found all the positions I had intended taking up already occupied; and so, not without a sense of disappointment and chagrin, was glad to resign into hands abler than my own, the task which I had undertaken, and on which I had for a year or more been engaged. Should I again return to the subject, it will be in connection with my work on 'Intellectual Development,' and should I be fortunate enough to see my way, I shall attempt to indicate the direction in which these doctrines of the new School of Economists will have to be modified in detail, to enable them to fit harmoniously into the framework of Civilization in general,—in which Political Economy itself is only one factor among many of equal importance.

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CHAPTER VII.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

DURING the time my book 'Civilization and Progress' was out of print, I was occupying myself by writing the earlier parts of this present autobiography, mainly with the idea that in a system of thought of any complexity, and in which the reader is obliged to shift somewhat his accustomed point of view, there is no way in which he can more easily be led to an understanding of it than by a detailed account of the successive steps by which it grew and took shape in the author's mind. Besides, since it has become generally recognised that there is no finality in Thought, but that more and more light comes and must come to man as the ages move on, the most important question, perhaps, in reference to an author is not so much the amount of *absolute* truth of which he is the possessor (for that can be but small at best), but the amount of truth *relative* to his age and time, and more especially the amount of truth which can be affiliated on the deposit left him by his predecessors in the direct line of evolution, thus leaving as little as possible of surplusage for the future to cancel as irrelevant or retrograde. I had always felt, too, that the most interesting form of writing was that in which thoughts on the World and on Life were presented not as mere abstract propositions true for everybody or nobody, but as they appeared when passed through the alembic of a single mind

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which had been variously modified by them in one direction or another, and had in turn reacted on them so as to colour or change their complexion or form. Indeed it is this which makes the novel so interesting as regards all that round of thought and sentiment with which it deals; it is evolution within the limits of a single life, rather than continued through a succession of lives, that is all. And lastly, there is no way in which the personal bias that adheres to every mind, and which it ought to be a point of honour with the Thinker to give the reader every opportunity of allowing for; there is no way in which this personal bias can be better exhibited, or in which it will more surely show itself, than in the evolution of his mind under the stimulus of, or reaction from, ideas and situations agreeable or alien to it.

As for the more personal reasons that induced me to enter on a work of this kind, I felt that if my life-work were about to be thwarted either by sheer bad luck (as at that time seemed not unlikely), or by the indisposition of the public to consider unfamiliar doctrines when put in a purely abstract and impersonal way, it still might be possible to obtain consideration for these doctrines if presented in a different form. At any rate, like Sir Walter Scott, I felt that some fresh shuffle of the cards was necessary, if my work were to go on at all; and in what other form than the autobiographical could I present my ideas, unless indeed as a Novel, in which however for want of space justice could only be done to a small division of the subject? And once having satisfied myself on this point, I felt that if the stages of my mental evolution were to be detailed at all, the work ought to be entered on before the vividness of the original impressions had altogether faded—and I was then in my fortieth year. I set to work on it accordingly, and with real enthusiasm, and before I set it aside again had written the chapters on my 'Boyhood,' on my 'Early Speculations,' and on the 'Lost Ideal.' And it was the number of stages in mental evolution through which I had passed in

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my search for this Lost Ideal, that first suggested to me the idea of writing the systematic work on the 'History of Intellectual Development' on which I then started, and the first volume of which has since appeared. And it was owing to the elaborate preparation necessary for this undertaking that I brought the chapters of the Autobiography at that time to a close,—but not without reluctance and regret; for begun as it was at a time when my life-work seemed a failure, my health broken, my hopes desperate, and my sky clouded by isolation and gloom, it was and still remains like the 'David Copperfield' of Dickens, the child of my heart.

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CHAPTER VIII.

INTERSTITIAL THINKERS.

DURING the interval of work on my Autobiography I returned to the writings of some of those recent Thinkers whom for some years I had neglected owing to my absorption in the studies necessary and preparatory to my book on Civilization, but who in the meantime had been carrying their own labours into wider and wider fields. I allude more especially to the works of Matthew Arnold, Huxley, Hutton, John Morley, Leslie Stephen, and Ruskin. I have called them interstitial Thinkers not because of any necessary inferiority in them to their respective masters,—on the contrary, in some particulars they are their superiors—but because their best work was done under the inspiration of, and within the general circuit of thought marked out by these masters; and consisted in filling in the gaps and interstices of thought left vacant by them, so as to form a continuous web applicable to nearly every side and aspect of Life; to History, to Politics, to Philosophy, and to Religion.

Matthew Arnold was the first I again took up. He was practically a disciple of Goethe, and the bulk of his life's work outside of his poetry, consisted in the endeavour to impregnate our literature with those parts of the teaching of his master which, for reasons given in a former chapter, could not be appropriated by either Emerson or Carlyle; and mainly with

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his great doctrine of the necessity of bringing every side and angle of our nature by an assiduous and unremitting cultivation up to the ideal of a full and harmonious Culture; in opposition to the English and American ideal, which is to begin by giving each individual ample liberty to clear a space for himself, within which he may then spread himself out at large as in some unweeded garden, with his angularities, vulgarities, limitations, and eccentricities, all on end and bristling with sensitiveness, in the full flower and flush of life, thick upon him. Indeed practically all the studies of Arnold are, in one direction or another, but expansions of this single theme. It is this which lies at the root of his preference for an Academy of Letters somewhat after the model of the French Academy, which shall insist that no work shall take classic rank which does not combine thought, sentiment, and style, matter and form, in some true and just proportion; instead of this rank being accorded as with us, to one-sided excellences and eccentricities, and left to private taste or individual caprice. It is this, too, which accounts for his preference for grace and form, over essential beauty and strength; for a general harmony over particular excellences; for the classical models in poetry, as Sophocles, over models like Shakspeare; and which is the main reason for his dislike not only of excess in general, but even of excess of beauty or power, as is seen in his disparagement of some of the most splendid poetical and rhetorical passages of Shakspeare and Keats. It accounts too, for his selection of French authors as his models of prose; for his exaggerated estimate of St. Beuve; and in general for his love of the 'gentlemanly' in style,—of ease, flexibility, and a kind of careless, well-bred grace,—rather than the hard, metallic, and aggressive note of the literary *nouveau riche* like Macaulay, with his air of having just come from an expensive course of instruction under the most approved masters.

It is this note of a trimmed and balanced culture that in matters of Religion and Philosophy accounts for his hatred of

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cut-and-dried systems, or indeed of systems of any kind, especially of German Metaphysics and Theology. It accounts too for his preference for Poetic Thinkers like Goethe and Bacon, over Thinkers like Comte and Herbert Spencer; and for Political Thinkers like Burke, over Thinkers like Mill; and in general for the impression he leaves, that a man should have as much philosophy as is befitting a man of culture and no more. And hence it is that he is in love with such light tea-table thinkers as Senancour and Amiel, who in contemplating the problem of the World resign themselves either to a poetic melancholy or to a charming but ineffectual moralizing over it; rather than with those who have stripped off their coats and energetically set to work to bring it by slow untiring labour a stage nearer solution. So much so, indeed, that in his excess of appreciation of the dignified and well-bred utterances of Bishop Wilson, or the delicate and balanced phrases of some of his French *protégés*, he comes perilously near falling into the patronage of platitude.

In the same way, too, as he prefers an Academy in Literature because it holds up for imitation only what is best and most refined in matter and style, he would have in Government an Executive that would represent the best sense of the community, and not the various party shibboleths and crazes,—Temperance, the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, and the like—one that would give us real and pressing *desiderata*, as a good system of Secondary Schools, and so on; and that would preserve for us in the Church, Establishment with its uniform standard of University education for the Clergy, and reflecting the tone and sentiment of men of culture, rather than Disestablishment and Dissent, reflecting the thoughts and opinions of their congregations merely. And hence too, his special aversion to the hugger-mugger of democratic politics, especially in Foreign Affairs, where the Cabinet takes its cue from the shifting opinions and passions of the man in the street, rather than from the fixed and continuous traditions of a body of

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specially-trained officials, with whom the ideas of 'superior persons' whose minds can play freely around these questions, would not be without influence. From the same cause, too, arises his good-humoured contempt for the Middle Class Philistines and all their works; his raillery of their aims and ideals, of their self-complacency in the contemplation of their own vulgarities, their boasting, and their love of dwelling on the cost of their wines and horses, their yachts and shooting-boxes; and his marked preference for the Barbarians (as he calls the Aristocracy) and the Upper Middle Class, with their quiet tone, simple manners, and absence of boasting, their freedom from all allusion in society to money or expenditure, and their 'cheery stoicism,' as Carlyle called it, in the face of misfortune or of ruin.

Arnold has, in a word, the same literary tastes as his master, Goethe, the same personal bias, and the same 'sweetness and light,' but has neither his breadth nor power, his insight nor penetration. The consequence is that although with his lambent flame he has played gracefully around nearly all the great problems of the world and of society, he has thrown no new light on any. His division of the different classes in English society into Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, was pointed and happy, but expressed distinctions which though true, were more or less obvious; and his just insight into the tendency of Aristocracies to repress the culture and expansion of the masses, was an easy deduction from it. But his want of real penetration is seen most clearly in his estimates of Thinkers and Philosophers. It was a piece of literary impertinence for a light skirmisher like himself to characterize a man like Comte as 'a grotesque old French pedant;' and it accurately marked the depth of his own soundings of Nature and Human Life when he denied to Emerson the title of Philosopher, and restricted his influence mainly to 'the stimulus which he has given to men to live in the spirit,'—as if he were merely some modern Marcus Aurelius.

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His works on Religion, too, show the same limitations in penetration and power; and I am sorry to be obliged to add, after all the labour he spent on them, have little or no real value. Coming to him as I have since done, from the studies in Biblical Criticism which were forced on me by the necessities of my work on the 'History of Intellectual Development,' I found his judgments crude, and his knowledge both of the Old Testament and the New, quite behind the accepted criticism even of his own time; while in his general reconstruction of Religion in the light of Modern Culture in his 'Literature and Dogma,' the want of insight displayed in his making the Religion of the Jews depend on Conduct and their experiences of Morality,—and so cutting it off entirely from its roots in the conception they had formed to themselves of the nature of the Personal Cause to whom such conduct is agreeable or otherwise, —was such a putting of the cart before the horse as to rule him out of the category of safe and sure-footed thinkers. That he should imagine that at a time when all codes of morality or conduct whatever, were directly dependent on supernatural sanctions, and got from them all their vitality and power—and were not as now largely dependent on experiences of utility—that he should imagine that the Jews alone should construct a religion so fierce and intense as theirs, out of the mere cold-blooded 'experiences' of conduct or morality, was to exhibit an utter want both of penetration and of historical perspective, and so not only to destroy his influence with Thinkers and Scholars, but to fail also in convincing the great general public whom it was his main object to reach. The one thought, perhaps, in all his writings that struck me as most central, and that often rises in my mind when political discussions are going on, was his perception that the reason why the right and just thing which all men know and love, is not done now and here, but still lingers when all apparently are longing to see it realized, is that under the circumstances of the place and time its realization would do more harm than good, would cause more

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trouble and mischief than it displaced; as, in his pregnant analogy, it would do, if pheasants were made private property like fowls.

Huxley, with his direct and courageous utterance, struck for me a more manly note than Arnold, and charmed me by his downright common sense, his freedom from affectation, and by a literary style which if less chaste perhaps than that of Arnold, is more brilliant, terse, and sinewy. It is as graceful and easy, too, in its way as his, when regard is had to the limits which Huxley allowed himself for the expression of his ideas, and the necessity he always felt of grappling with his subject without waste of space or loss of time. Like a French posture-master bowing you in and out of a room, Arnold occupies so much time in gracefully skirmishing about and sparring for an opening to his subject; so much, too, in endless repetitions of the same thought and the same phrases; that not only his sentences but whole paragraphs and even whole essays, are as loose and light in texture as gauze; and with so much elbow-room for posturing in, not to be easy and graceful would indeed have shown a lack of literary power.

In the general lines of his thought, Huxley works within the limits marked out by Darwin and Spencer; but with less of pedantry and cut-and-dried theory, especially in matters political and social, than the latter, and with a wider range of general culture than the former. But both his Agnosticism and his Idealism are retrograde and out of date. In the one, he goes back to the position of Hume, in the other to that of Descartes, while the one really great contribution of Spencer to Philosophy —his doctrine namely of the Persistence of Force, in its bearing on Causation—is entirely missed by him. With Huxley as with Hume, Causation is not a *necessity* of thought, but has only that high degree of *probability* which the uniform absence of any experience to the contrary has given it—nothing more. Spencer on the other hand has shown, as we have seen, that Scientific Causation is a direct deduction from the Persistence

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of Force, and that the Persistence of Force is a *necessity* of thought, without which, indeed, the experience to which Huxley refers Causation for confirmation, could not have existed at all. For without a belief in the persistence of Force, not only could you not depend on your scales and measures (without which scientific *proof* were impossible), but you would not even be here; for without reliance on the uniformity of Nature, which is a necessary deduction from the Persistence of Force, no animal from the beginning of Time up till now could ever have learned how to adjust its motions so as to catch its prey; and so we should not have been here at all! The Biblical Criticisms, too, in which in later years he was so fond of indulging, are like those of Arnold of little or no value. They were all taken up *ad captandum*, and without sufficient insight into the complex web of circumstances that preceded and attended the genesis and evolution of the doctrines or incidents he assails; and besides are so freighted with theological *animus*, and viewed so entirely from the standpoint of present-day thought, that although justifiable when used as polemics against systems which still profess to rule the minds of men, they are worthless for purposes of pure historical truth.

Hutton, the late Editor of the Spectator, was in his way as good a critic as Arnold; he had less breadth and freedom from personal bias, less tact and polish, perhaps, but more ingenuity and subtlety; and was besides, as strong a thinker within the limits of the Orthodox Creed, as any man of his time. For although neither he nor his master, Maurice, added anything new to the broad theological positions of Newman, the skill and ingenuity with which he handled and applied his theological weapons in his controversies with his scientific opponents, were triumphs of dialectical subtlety worthy of a Jesuit. His mind, in fact, was ingenious and subtle rather than massive and comprehensive, and his critical faculty more acute than his observation or penetration. For the microscopic dissection of a motive or a sentiment, he was without a parallel. The more

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recondite and subtle it was, indeed, the better he liked it; and his mind could turn round in a smaller space than any writer I know. His public function as editor helped to keep him, like Gladstone, broad and sweet; otherwise, if left to himself he would have ended by dancing theologically on the point of a needle! But latterly the Higher Criticism was getting too strong for him, and his articles in the 'Spectator' bearing on it, were marked by more hesitation and uncertainty than of yore. The one theological position of his that seemed to me impregnable, was his taking his stand on the turn of the will, if one may so express it, as the point through which spiritual influences and suggestions of a supernatural kind can enter the mind without interfering with its normal and regulated activity under the dominion of natural law. It was a fine piece of theological strategy, and was calculated to give his opponents much trouble in dislodging him—so long at any rate as the freedom of the will remains an open question in metaphysical speculation. For even if his hypothesis were not demonstrable, or even probable, it always offered a safe passage to those minds that were intent on finding some kind of umbilical cord by which to attach themselves to, or nourish themselves on, the Divine Mind. But he lost his critical balance at last, and ended by believing as he once wrote to me, that the attraction of one piece of matter for another was due to the direct Will of God.

His purely literary criticisms, however, were of a very high quality when allowance is made for his personal bias, which like that of Newman was characterized by a deep and habitual piety, and which made him look at all things through their bearings on morality and devotion. Indeed were it not for this, it would be difficult to find in modern criticism better estimates of Goethe, Wordsworth, Shelley, Hawthorne, or George Eliot. The distinction he drew between great novelists like Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, whose characters have so much individuality that they bend and mould their social medium or environment to their own natures, and the ordinary

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run of novelists who give the general social *milieu* the first place, and whose characters like 'walking gentlemen,' have only just sufficient individuality not to violate its conventions, is worth cart-loads of ordinary criticism.

Of all the thinkers whom we are here passing under review, John Morley is perhaps the most of an independent force, being the offspring not of one master mainly, like the others, but of the cross-fertilization of two, who were so like and yet so unlike that their union was calculated to produce the best quality of fruit. He has, in a word, so modified the conceptions of his great constructive master, Comte, by the critical and analytical acumen of Mill, and has so watered and nourished them both with the practical sagacity of Burke, that his own writings, as the product of this complex union, may be said to rank almost as new creations; and coming to him from my studies on Civilization, he was the writer who of all others came nearest in my judgment to a true estimate of the relations of all the factors concerned in that complex product. Like Comte he cares little for metaphysical speculations, whether they be those of Mill or others; and like Comte, too, he sees the absurdity of attempting to explain the Universe by any single principle, physical or spiritual, as is done by Spencer and Hegel. All such speculations he would, if not forbid, still rule out as of quite subordinate importance; and would confine himself to that narrow belt of territory into which both abstract Philosophy and Physical Science play indeed, but where moralities and customs and traditions and social systems and races and classes of men, all jostle each other, and between which as between the members of Barnum's 'happy family' of cats and dogs, rats and monkeys, the greatest triumph of intellect is to keep the peace. The Social Problem in a word is his theme, as alone being in the power of man to modify; and the social point of view the one to which all other points of view must be subordinated. Indeed with Morley, as with Goethe and Schopenhauer, purely abstract intellectual

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curiosity is not a natural product of the human mind, but an artificial one rather; arising originally as he believes not from the love of truth for its own sake, but as an instrument for the realization of those complex desires of men which can only find their full satisfaction in society,—hunger, ambition, love of power, fear, hope, and the rest—an instrument which when it has enabled us to gratify these desires, is relegated to its subordinate place again; the sphere of Intelligence being thus limited for us, he considers, by the purposes and functions which it originally subserved. And here it is that he parts company with Comte. For although he agrees with him that Intellect is but an instrument to guide us to our ends, he recognizes that these ends themselves are not determined by the Intelligence, but by a Social Ideal within us on the one hand, and by the Material and Social Conditions of the age and time which prevent our realizing that Ideal, on the other. The difference is vital, for while Comte fixing his eye on his Social Ideal would call on the Intellect to realize it *now and here;* and in consequence with as little chance of success as if in building a bridge he should begin by adapting it to the farther shore instead of to the shore on which he stands; Morley would begin by adapting his measures to the existing conditions of society on which we stand and work, and would go on adapting them to these conditions at each stage of his progress, until he reaches the opposite shore, the Social Ideal itself. But just as in the bridge no one part of its girders and beams can be pushed forward until all its collateral supports come fairly up into line; or as no part of a flock of sheep can be allowed to get too far forward or too far behind the rest if the whole flock is to advance; so if society is to steadily progress, no one or more of its complex elements can be greatly changed or pushed forward, until the rest also are brought up into line. It is clearly a problem of how to *harmonize* a number of discordant elements and factors, rather than of giving the primacy to one, or of *aggrandizing* some at

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the expense of the rest; and as these elements—these religions and customs and classes and moralities—are all in continual flux like the waves of the sea, all pushing and struggling like the sheep in a flock, the question with Morley is how are they best to be handled so as to secure a steady and continuous advance? By giving them the fullest individual Liberty of Movement compatible with the equal liberty of all, he replies, so that when they do unite, it will be like chemical atoms by their own affinities; thus forming staple natural divisions with which the statesman can deal as if they were single and compact entities or forces. And so he parts company with Comte, who with the remote ideal rather than the next immediate step in his eye, would at once distribute men into rigid and formal divisions according to the pattern of his dreams,—into castes and hierarchies, which being more or less artificial and premature, would like type that is boxed before the revised 'proof' has come in, have all to be taken down again.

Society then, having been given the fullest liberty to group itself into its natural divisions as when a ball-room prepares itself for a dance by grouping itself into sets and figures, something further is still necessary as preliminary; for the groups with their pushing and jostling have to be kept from running each other to the wall,—and how is this to be done? By Compromise, says Morley, or that give-and-take which shall allow each to be kept in line, and shall prevent any one division from over-riding or absorbing the rest. But this Compromise, it is to be remembered, is not a mere weak acquiescence in, and tolerance of, all the elements that may happen to assert themselves; on the contrary it is restricted only to those which are vital and positive; and so is consistent with the vigorous repression of all that is negative, obstructive, degenerate, or pernicious, — of rowdyism, scoundrelism, monopolism, organized parasitism, and all those retrograde institutions that have come down from earlier times, and are still entrenched behind the barriers of law long after public

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opinion has condemned them. And it is on the one hand in determining what has to be lopped off as superfluous or noxious, and on the other in keeping all the vital and positive elements together, as a shepherd his sheep, so that they shall move forward harmoniously; now repressing the froward who would break up this harmony, and now urging on the laggards who threaten to fall out of line,—it is in this, that in *peaceful* States all Practical Statesmanship properly so called consists; and in the endeavour to bring English Statesmanship back to it, with his watchwords of Liberty and Compromise, Morley is but following in the footsteps of Burke. But in States that have become ultra-democratic in constitution before their natural time, or where pushing politicians making the nation their milch-cow, instead of urging the lowest strata to earn their franchise before they exercise it, as they have to do their beer, would throw it open to them and force it on them as they do their tap-rooms on election days; when political brigands representing overgrown ambitions, Tory or Radical,—military jingoism, anarchism, constitution-mongering, eight-hour despotisms, and the like,—instead of shepherding the flock, vie with each other in swooping down on it to coerce or kidnap it each in his own special interest, and so instead of softening and harmonizing the antagonisms of different classes and interests, still further accentuate them,—then will the high statesmanship of Burke go to the wall, and the reign of the Demagogue will be near at hand. And if Morley fails as a practical statesman, it will not be from want of penetration into the nature of all the forces engaged, nor perhaps from want of a just insight into the measures needed for their harmonious working, but because in the winged flights of electors to the political utopias and Klondikes which are held up before them, there will not be left a sufficient number of moderate and sagacious supporters with the motto of 'Liberty and Compromise' on their lips, to enable him to carry them through.

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Morley's historical studies of the men and events preceding the French Revolution,—of Rousseau, Diderot, Voltaire, and the rest,—are all written from the Social point of view, and are dominated throughout by his conception of the march of Civilization in general and as a whole; and in them all, the influence of Comte is clearly seen. But he corrects the one-sidedness of Comte, by a finer insight into the part played in Civilization by the general Material and Social conditions of the age and time. He points out for example that the French Revolution did not absorb the whole propaganda of the great intellectual movement that preceded it and helped to bring it on, but only such elements of it as were demanded by the grinding material, political, and social tyranny of the time; in the same way as in America, the watchwords of 'Liberty and Equality' were limited to the white population alone. His study of Burke, which is marked throughout by much of the political wisdom of the master himself, has always remained with me as one of the finest studies of its kind in the language.

Leslie Stephen, again, acknowledges no particular master; and his *rôle* has been mainly to sprinkle cold water on all political, religious, or social enthusiasms, and on all literary estimates when they get overheated or exaggerated. He is essentially a negative thinker, materialistic, agnostic, and good-naturedly pessimistic, but with a fine sanity and sense of humour that keeps him in all things from exaggeration or absurdity. His studies of the thinkers of preceding centuries, although always acute and vigorous, have the common fault of being dominated too much from the standpoint of to-day, instead of being exhibited as stages in a continuous evolution of thought—without which, indeed, all time spent on extinct and exploded systems is practically wasted.

Ruskin charmed me as he did all the young writers of the time by his style; but he left behind him besides, a solid deposit of thought, in the original turn he gave to the current Political Economy, especially in the pregnant question he put to the

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employers of labour to which I have already referred, as well as by his demonstration of the nature and functions of the Imagination in his 'Modern Painters,' a study marked by great subtlety and penetration, and more level and convincing than his judgments in my opinion usually are. As Carlyle once remarked to me of him, 'He has a fine sense of beauty, but has lived too much in the ideal to be quite level with the present world.'

It may seem strange that in a survey of the seminal thinkers of the time, the illustrious name of John Stuart Mill should not have been mentioned. The truth is that before I began my studies, his points of view had been so taken up and embodied in the larger generalizations of Spencer, and such an extension had been given to them there, that it was no longer possible to return to him. Besides, in spite of his fine and noble nature, his love of truth, his beautiful unconscious simplicity, and his natural affinity for all that was great and good; in spite too of his clearness and acuteness of mind; there was something thin in his intellectual views, something wire-drawn and metaphysical; and although his unusual scrupulosity and care, and his openness to all that could be said on every side of a question, gave you the impression that the subject had been thoroughly thrashed out and all its limitations and objections duly considered and allowed for, still you were always left with the feeling that the demonstration was not so much a living and humanly-convincing one, as a logical and dialectical one mainly; and so you were never quite satisfied. There was a want of the sense of mass, a feeling as if the subject had been broken up in some artificial way, so as not to be altogether free from the danger of fallacies having crept in between the interstices of the logic, or at the points of junction of the fragments; as if it were being dealt with in threads rather than in the web. If the subject were Political Economy, for example, it was torn, as Comte complained, from the general web of Civilization in which it lay, and presented by itself, as if it were independent of the

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great mesh of custom, tradition, political and social power, legal status, and so on, with which it was encompassed and bound up. For although his 'economic man' was admittedly put forward as an abstraction to simplify the subject, his arguments and deductions were never afterwards modified and supplemented by the considerations needed to bring this 'economic man' up to a reality. *Laissez-faire*, again, which was originally advanced as a temporary expedient to meet an excess of political interference, is treated with as much respect as if it were an economic maxim true for all time. If, again, it were a problem of Politics with which he was dealing, not enough allowance was made for tradition, custom, environment, balance of powers, historical antecedents, compromise, and so on, but all was too cut-and-dried, too formal, too purely logical to reflect truly the tangled web of human life; and you never got the synthesis necessary to make the demonstration correspond with the reality. Or if, again, it were a Philosophical theme, his treatment of it was too metaphysical, too abstract, too analytical; while if it were the human mind that was in question, he dealt too much with the *débris* into which the faculties were analyzed and decomposed, and which as having no separate existence of their own, could not be treated as independent entities or powers with legitimate values, and so could not be made the subjects of constructive combinations or of scientific predication. If you wanted this you would have to go elsewhere. Indeed with all his clearness and purity of intellect, there was something in the structure of his mind which seemed to gravitate not so much to reality, as to logical refinements and subtleties. And yet when I think of all he did, I am not sure that these characteristics did not result as much perhaps from the age and time in which he was cast, from his philosophic antecedents, and from the species of questions that were thrust on him (and, in consequence, from the marked absence in him of the sense of historical perspective, or of any adequate conception of evolution in the modern sense of the term), as from his intellect itself. He was an *ad interim*

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thinker, if I may so designate him, standing with one leg on the old and the other on the new, and although a Colossus in his way, was condemned to stand there unable to move. Indeed had he attempted to come down from his pedestal to join with the younger men who walked onwards under his great shadow, he would have fallen to pieces. In Political Economy, one foot rested on Individualism, the other on Socialism; in Philosophy, one foot on Locke and Bentham, the other on Spencer; in Sociology, one foot on the Encyclopædists, the other on Comte. He has in consequence added nothing of permanent value to thought, and has left no School. Although a Materialist, he was neither prepared to accept an unified conception of the Physical World like that of Spencer, nor a physiological basis of mind like that of Bain and the Modern School of Psychologists. He has in consequence added nothing new to our views of the Outer World like Spencer, nor to the subtler laws of the Spiritual World like Emerson and Carlyle, nor again to the laws of Society like Comte; and so in spite of his rare and beautiful philosophical temper and spirit, and the sweet personal aroma he left behind him, he must remain only as the most powerful of those who smoothed the way and bridged the gulf between the Old Metaphysical, and the New Scientific conceptions of the World.

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CHAPTER IX.

ISOLATION AND DEPRESSION.

HAVING exhibited in my work on Civilization the connexion and interplay of the great factors of human progress, and the way in which they have pushed up the world stage by stage through an ascending series of terraces or platforms towards the Ideal of a perfected Morality, I now entered on an enquiry with the view of ascertaining whether if the investigation were carried farther still into the minuter details of history and civilization, this ascent of morality which showed like a series of terraces from the distance might not on a closer view be found to rise in a continuous unbroken line; and if so whether this continuous evolution upwards towards the Ideal was to be referred to the normal action of the human mind working after its own proper laws, or whether the individual actors in the drama, however prominent, were so unconscious of what they were really doing, that like blind men struggling strenuously in the darkness, their separate actions had to be co-ordinated and overruled by a Supreme Mind presiding over all. And accordingly in the autumn of 1892, as soon as the re-printing of 'Civilization and Progress' was off my hands, I set out in high spirits on the new enterprise of writing a detailed history of Intellectual Development on the lines of Modern Evolution. This, which I expected to fill two or three large volumes, and which would perhaps occupy the greater part of my working

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life, would it was evident require an immense amount of labour and research; and I accordingly provided myself as if for an expedition, with a formidable array of books, English and Foreign, needed for the enterprise, — historical, political, theological, metaphysical, scientific,—and many of which I had afterwards to confess, were for boredom, triviality, repetition, long-windedness, and absence of human interest generally, without a parallel since the days when Carlyle descended into the Serbonian bogs of the British Museum to fish up out of its 'shot rubbish' if possible, something human, credible, and authentic about Frederick or Cromwell. But I had not proceeded far on my way before I was overtaken by a series of disasters which well-nigh cut short the enterprise at the outset, and for some years left me a prey to nervous exhaustion and despondency. Some of them had been lowering in the sky for some time, but had kept up only a low muttering and rumbling along the rim of the horizon; but now they began to creep gradually upwards, until when they were quite overhead, they united their borders and descended on me in torrents.

The first was the loss of a large part of the income on which I depended for enabling me to continue my literary work. It so happened that after setting aside the chances of a consulting practice as we saw in an earlier chapter, and refusing the offer of a first-class general practice, I had with the view of getting for myself as much free, unencumbered time as possible for my writing, bought an easily worked practice within a short distance of my own house; and for ten or twelve years all went smoothly and well. The neighbourhood was one of the Estates projected by the late Lord Shaftesbury. It was laid out in avenues lined with plane-trees, and flanked with long rows of houses, with projecting porches and pointed arches overgrown with ivy and creepers;—and all most sweet, clean, and respectable. There were no public-houses allowed on the Estate; and in the school hours the streets with the exception of the vendors of coal and vegetables, and the figures of curates, nurses,

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scripture-readers and doctors moving in and out among the houses, were almost deserted; and all was quietness and peace. I enjoyed going in and out among the people, and interesting myself in their occupations and lives; and nothing could have been more congenial or satisfactory than my work among them. My income was sufficient, my consulting hours short, the patients all lay close together, and the visiting could be got through in some six or seven hours each day without discomfort or strain. I kept an assistant who did the night work and dispensing, and so had abundant leisure for reading and study without in any way interfering with my duties to my patients. In the morning before my round of visits, I read and made notes from my books of reference; in the afternoon I attended the various special hospitals with the view of working up certain subjects—the nervous system, the eye, the skin, the heart,—in which I was more particularly interested, and of keeping in touch with the latest developments of Medical Science generally; and after nine o'clock in the evening I was free to work in peace and stillness far into the night. It was as I have said an ideal practice in its way for a literary man. But gradually strange figures going from door to door with note-books in their hands, began to appear among the well known forms in the streets; and in a few years they had increased in number to such an extent that the neighbourhood literally swarmed with them. They were the agents and advance scouts of various Medical Insurance and Medical Aid Societies, as they were called, which had been started as commercial speculations, with the object of supplying medical advice and medicine to all and sundry who cared to join them, on the payment of a small sum weekly all the year round, ill or well; and naturally enough the poorer class neighbourhoods were the main centres of their activity and propaganda. They had originally appeared in the Provinces, and after tightening their coils around the neck of the profession there with the connivance of the Medical Council, and leaving wide ruin and desolation behind them in the homes of medical men, they had

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advanced on London, which they had laid out in districts for their operations, and were now prepared to lay siege to in force. Their plan of campaign was as subtle in conception as it was simple and broadly effective in execution; and consisted in holding out to the young medical men who had just passed their 'finals,' the prospect of an immediate *clientèle* of patients if they would consent to become the Medical Officers of the Societies; representing to them that although the pay was small, this was more than compensated for by the admirable introduction it would give them to private practice. This seemed feasible, and in many cases the bait was too tempting to be refused; and the consequence was that flights of young freebooters fresh from the Medical Schools, in the absence of any authority like that of the Incorporated Law Society to safeguard the interests of the profession and to prevent the lowering of its status, descended in flights on the practices of the older-established men in the poorer districts; and in their capacity of Medical Officers to the Societies, carried them off wholesale. In the meantime the Societies with their army of agents and touts in the field and canvassing from door to door, had continued extending their operations until whole districts were drawn into their nets; and with their war-cry of 'Why pay doctors when you can join a club?' taken up by Church and Chapel, had soon strangled the cries of the outraged profession and reduced it to submission; leaving the poor deluded medical officers who were to capture remunerative *private* practices by their bargain with the Societies, standing looking into each other's faces with nothing but *club* practices on their hands (the private ones being now practically all absorbed);—and to imagine that by capturing these from each other they were going to make a living, was as utopian as were the hopes of that community who were going to live by taking in each other's washing! And as each in turn ruined or disgusted, threw up his connexion with the Societies, you had the curious spectacle of households which had previously been

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employing the private doctors of their choice, now handed over in batches of fifties or hundreds at a time from one medical man to another, until whole neighbourhoods, so far as the possibility of making a living by the practice of your profession was concerned, were as if an army of locusts had passed over them. And in all this the Societies were aided and abetted by the Medical Council as I have said, who after having with a fine sense of humour taken *our* registration fees, not to defend us against the Public but to defend the Public against us, when the cry of the Profession went up to them from all parts of the country praying for help against the tyranny of the Societies,—and especially when the peculiarly aggravated case of a Liverpool tea-merchant who was advertising the services of a medical man gratis to all those who bought a pound of tea, was brought before it,—frankly told us that they were there in the interests of the Public and not of the Profession; and winking knowingly at each other at the cleverness of that tradesman, passed on to 'the order of the day!'

Now it was by the tightening of the cordon which these Medical Aid Societies had been gradually drawing around the neighbourhood in which my practice lay, that I was noosed; and in two or three years my practice together with those of most of the other medical men in the district, had fallen fifty per cent. in value; my more purely personal practice which was scattered here and there through all parts of London, not being sufficient to enable me to bear the strain. The effect of this on my mind was most disturbing. For up to this time, what with the printing, reprinting, and advertising of my books, I was some four hundred pounds out of pocket after all my receipts from them had been allowed for; but as my income was sufficient, I had borne the strain without serious inconvenience; but now that I had lost a large part of my income, not only could I no longer afford to spend money on my literary work, but as it was I was threatened with ruin. I had been writing steadily, or collecting

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materials for writing, for over twenty years, to the sacrifice of all professional advancement, to the injury of my nervous system and of my eyesight, and had received in return neither honour, reputation, nor money; but all this I had brushed gaily aside in my enthusiasm for the work which I had set myself to accomplish. And now in the middle of it all I saw myself threatened with degradation and beggary. I who had never owed a penny in my life, and to whom the face of a hostile or importunate creditor would have been an insult, now saw in imagination the bailiffs at the door; and the thought of it fell on my mind like a stain. Not that I felt myself beaten; on the contrary I had not yet fought, nor had the chance of fighting; but with my life-work yet unaccomplished, saw myself like Swift left to wear my heart out 'like a poisoned rat in a hole.' The thought of it, together with the mental strain incident on my attempt to hurry on the work on 'Intellectual Development' before I was quite submerged; all this, with the death of my assistant by suicide after being with me so many years, brought on an illness of exhaustion, prostration, and nervous depression;—from which, however, I should doubtless soon have recovered but for two additional causes which as being of a more intangible and immaterial nature were more difficult to be combated.

The first was the position of intellectual isolation into which I was forced both by my actual opinions and by the particular *rôle* which I had assumed for myself. Not that this would naturally have affected my relationship with others. For so little regard had I always had for what are called the *opinions* of men (whether my own or others'), as distinct from their *sentiments;* so deeply had I always felt how poor and ineffectual were all our efforts in the discovery of truth; that the best were but a scratching of the surface; and that it was a case at most of beggars all; that I could not understand how any mere difference of opinion as such, could cause a cleavage in personal relationships. But I was aware that this was not

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necessarily the case with others, and as in my self-assumed *rôle* as philosopher there was no single school or 'cause' with which I could identify myself, and into which I could throw myself with entire devotion; and as moreover I greatly disliked anything that was not whole-souled and genuine; I felt that I must not be by my luke-warmness, a wet blanket to others more deeply involved in and dedicated to their respective 'causes' than myself. The consequence was that I was left in a kind of intellectual isolation, if I may so call it, and with no single man or body of men with whom I could unite myself. This had always been a great deprivation to me, but after twenty years or more of it, it began to eat into my spirits, and helped insensibly to make me lose interest in my own work. I longed to unite myself with somebody or some 'cause,' but as these 'causes' were founded usually on precisely those intellectual agreements in opinion for which I had so little natural regard, there was nothing for it but to wander about as in a kind of desert, with no companions but my own thoughts—a poor equipment for a long and difficult campaign. I could neither throw in my lot with Orthodox Christianity, deeply as I felt the moral beauty of its precepts, and conscious as I was of the great work it had done in the world, for I could not accept its dogmas in the sense in which they are accepted by its followers; nor could I throw in my lot with the Materialists and Agnostics, in spite of my being one with them, as we have seen, on an entire side of my intellectual method; for I saw that as taught by their leading exponents they were pledged to the denial of the definite existence in the World and in the Human Mind of an Ideal which stood as the representative of a Power outside both; while as for the old dogmatic Atheism, it always seemed to me to be as great a piece of intellectual arrogance and impertinence on the one side, as the claims of the Priesthood were on the other. And yet at the same time I had a sympathy with men like Newman who were convinced of the necessity of some kind of

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Revelation for poor human souls, although it would have been a mere hypocrisy for me to profess to believe that the Bible alone was that revelation, or that the Catholic Church was its sole interpreter. If I felt a shade of contempt at all (and this was naturally foreign to me), it was for the innumerable sects who would split the world on a question of baptism by sprinkling or baptism by immersion, or some other trivial observance; and yet even here, again, I was bound to respect the intellectual basis of it all; for so long as the great body of Christendom professes to hold that the letter of the Bible is inspired, men are right in refusing to have its literal interpretation whittled away by the first sciolist who comes along, and who because he imagines that he or another has discovered that the Fourth Gospel was not the work of the Apostle John, or that the second epistle of Peter was not a genuine production, thinks that therefore the whole significance of Holy Writ must be resigned as worthless. On the other hand, again, I saw that so long as the old Mosaic Cosmogony and its concomitants and adjuncts were permitted to hold the field, the Cosmogony of Science with all the truths it carried with it, would be discredited, and Science itself degraded. Again, I had a sympathy with those who tried to liberalize the Church and its Theology while still remaining within its fold, as well as with those who held that if you did not fully accept its dogmas you should go out of it. Indeed there was no side or aspect of current thought or speculation with which I had not some sympathy, and yet none which I could accept whole-heartedly and without limitations and reservations fatal to a closer union; whether it were in Religion, Politics, or Society. I was a Theist, and yet not precisely a Bible Theist; an Agnostic, and yet not accepting the Agnostic point of view for the *interpretation* of the mystery of existence; a believer in Revelation, and yet not in the Gospel Revelation in its accepted sense, to the exclusion of other forms; a man of Faith, if I may say so, and yet not of any of the *special* faiths in vogue. In Politics,

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again, I was a Radical, but averse to precipitating radical changes before the time was ripe or all the collateral forces had come up into line; a Conservative, and yet as seeing the necessity of constant change and continuous progress; a believer in most of the advanced 'causes,'—Temperance, the elevation of Women, leisure for the Working-man, the socialization of industries and of public functions, and the rest,—and yet would not give effect to them until men had been educated up to them and were prepared to appreciate them. I was an Imperialist, and yet a Municipalist; a Cosmopolitan, and yet a Patriot; a believer in Might being Right, and yet that Right and not Might would ultimately prevail; a believer in Peace, and yet as seeing the ultimate necessity of War; an ardent defender of Individual Liberty, and yet as seeing the necessity of occasional Despotism. I believed in Preaching and in Legislative Interference; and yet saw that things themselves would make their own Morality and their own Laws, in spite of Politicians or Priests.

With this incapacity for union with others there was evidently nothing for it but to continue steadily on with the work which I had mapped out for myself; and yet this had now become very irksome to me. Not that I was not interested in the work itself; on the contrary it bristled everywhere with just such problems as those with which I had all along been accustomed to deal; and everywhere there was room for more adequate and harmonious interpretations, as well as for fresh points of view. No, it was not the character of the work of which I was weary; what poisoned my mind and was my constant theme during the greater part of the time in which I was engaged on the 'History of Intellectual Development,' was the feeling which had now become settled and habitual with me, namely, that nobody any longer cared for any of these things; and to this hour I cannot tell how much of this was true, and how much of it was due to the isolation in which I found myself, and to the depression under which I was labouring. My

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literary friends were for the most part novelists and journalists, and their interests as was natural centred largely around current politics, the stage, or the latest works of fiction; and I must have seemed to most of them with the best will in the world, a literary outsider, or a fossil of an extinct species. If I sent a chapter of one of the books I was writing to a Monthly Review, (and first or last I sent nearly every one that contained anything novel either in treatment or point of view), it was invariably declined. Indeed it was not until just twenty years after I had sent in my first paper 'God or Force?' that I had an article accepted,—my chapter on 'Jesus Christ'—in the 'Fortnightly Review' for September 1896. And as I had never at any time had the least suspicion that the Editors had any personal objection to me, what could I think but that there were no longer a sufficient number of readers interested in these things?—unless, indeed, it were (as one of the Editors expressed it), that my writings were 'wanting both in point and lucidity.' For years I had thrown all this gaily aside, and had put it down to bad luck, or 'the daemonic,' as we have seen, but now that I had fallen into a state of depression, I could only attribute my persistent failure to a want of interest in serious subjects generally; and the original stock of energy and light-hearted buoyancy which had never once flagged during nearly twenty years of obscurity, isolation, and disappointment, received a blow which it could not parry; and which left abiding traces on my mind. And yet I cannot feel sure whether there ever was the interest in these subjects which in my youthful enthusiasm I imagined; or whether if there were, it had really declined. But there were several reasons outside my own personal feelings which seemed to support my conviction that there was now no longer the interest in these matters that there was at the outset of my literary career. For where now is the interest in Philosophy and Theology, in Materialism, and Atheism and Agnosticism that there was in my College days, and which made our discussions far into

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the night, like the feasts of the gods? Gone, I thought, or declined in the public mind from the high severity of doctrine and philosophy which then characterized these discussions, to trivial disputes on the details of ritual and Church ceremonial. Where now is the old interest in Political Economy? Gone, too, and its books except for College and examination purposes unsaleable. How different in the days when John Stuart Mill was king! Where, too, is now the old interest in abstract Politics,—in Socialism, the Franchise, Popular Rights, the Ballot, Representation by Population, and the rest? Why, political clubs that once would have been packed to hear a lecture on politics, can now, I am assured, only be filled when the subject is something popular and amusing; while as for Sociology, it has come down to the Sex-problem, and to as much only of that as can be distilled into the public mind through the Novel or the columns of the Press in the 'silly season.' Even in History and the more popular forms of serious literature, the interest seems to me to have so palpably declined, that I have often thought that had Carlyle, Ruskin, Macaulay, Buckle, Mill, Lecky, Spencer, Morley, or Arnold started publishing their literary work to-day, they would have been practically ignored; and the Clubs that were founded with the object of recognizing and representing serious literature, and which hailed and heralded these writers from the very outset of their careers, would to-day know them no more. The only form of serious work which still flourishes is the purely Scientific; and this is because it embraces such an immense number of workers that they form a public by themselves separate from the general public—which no doubt would have given them as short shrift as the rest, had they been obliged to appeal to its suffrages.

Now in endeavouring to trace this decline in the interest in serious thought and literature to its true cause, I have sometimes thought that it was owing mainly to the dim and but vaguely conscious acceptance in all ranks of cultured society of the great

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doctrine of Evolution, which like a kind of Fate lays its iron hand on the shoulders of the individual worker, and keeps him down to the accumulation of facts, and of them only, permitting him no free initiative, or unencumbered flights of speculation. And I have sometimes imagined that it was this that accounted for the excessive specialization of Science, and for the absence among all its army of workers, of any interest in merely general views such as were so popular in pre-Darwinian times; and of the restriction of its honours and rewards to specialists and to technicalities which are *caviare* to the general. It seemed to me too, to account for the comparative want of interest among Historians, in histories mainly literary like those of Macaulay or Froude; and in general for the precedence which is given to the Germans, with their industry and plodding care in every department of Science, History, Theology, and Philosophy, over the same class of workers in either England, France or America; in spite of the fact that nearly all the great seminal ideas have been English and French, and not German. Even literary criticism and questions of style are relegated now not so much to men of general fineness of literary taste, as to specialists of the different periods; and as much on linguistic, grammatical, or etymological grounds as on purely literary; so that you have critics of special periods—Old English, Elizabethan, Queen Anne, or Early Victorian—as you have scientific specialists of the Glacial Period, of Fossil Fishes, or of the geology of the Cretaceous Formations. Even the success of popular papers like 'Tit Bits,' or of popular Monthlies like the 'Strand' Magazine, is due to the same desire to come at the actual facts of human life, free from all theory or prepossession. And lastly the belief in evolution accounts largely for the practical absorption of all literature in the Novel, or of as much at least as can be squeezed and compressed into it; for as I have already said, what is the novel but the evolution of the individual mind on certain only of its sides and aspects, and mainly on those that can be made of interest to the general

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reader? And it was chiefly due to my still but partially conscious perception that nothing now was interesting but evolution in one or other of its forms, and to a large extent that nothing was so really instructive, that I determined to write my 'History of Intellectual Development' on strict lines of evolution, with as few gaps and interstices in the flowing web of events as possible, and with no general theory of any kind,—except indeed such as should arise naturally out of the facts as their aroma or essence, and not be put into them beforehand to colour them like a dye.

Now although this permeation of the public mind with the doctrine of evolution was the first explanation that rose in my mind when I thought of the decline of public interest in serious literature, still I often wondered whether it might not be largely referable to a cause so different as the decline of religious belief, and especially of the belief in a future of rewards and punishments. For if, as Comte and Schopenhauer thought, the intellect exists only for the better realization of our desires, and has no special love of knowledge for its own sake, the fear of Hell must have been a most potent stimulus to intellectual curiosity in reference to all things bearing on religion, whether of a theological, philosophical, or historical nature,—as indeed was seen in the wide extent of region explored in the search for the so-called 'Evidences of Christianity,'—and the decline of that fear must it is evident have sooner or later been attended by a considerable falling away of interest in all these things. And the fact that a School-Board election should lately have turned, as it did, not on whether the moral precepts of Christianity were to be taught or not, (for on that all parties were agreed,) but on whether the old Mosaic Cosmogony with all its incredibilities and historical adjuncts (in which no party really believed), was to be taught or not, seemed to me to indicate a want of seriousness on these matters, or in other words an indifference to intellectual truth for its own sake, which could not have existed twenty years ago.

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But whether the decline of interest in serious thought was due to one or other of the above causes, or whether it existed only in my own imagination, certain it is that the belief in it, combined with the depression from which I was suffering, made me quite lose interest in my work, and I no longer cared to go on with my 'History' as before. I had now, too, passed my forty-fifth birthday, and had like Charles Lamb for some time seen the 'skirts of the departing years' with a kind of horror; and now that like Tolstoi I began to feel that I was fighting on a declining day, I had no longer any wish to protract the struggle any further. I had lived for an ideal in which no one now seemed to believe; and I was too old to embrace a second love; the best of life had been drunk already, and like Macbeth there was now nothing left but the lees to brag of. I grew restless and dissatisfied, and the rounds of my medical practice which had been so great a pleasure and relaxation to me, were now as odious and monotonous as the rounds of a prison-yard. My first impulse was to break through it all; I often longed to return to the wild life of my boyhood; and when I heard of any mischief afoot in the Cape or elsewhere, could I have had my youth back again, and been free from family ties, I should have embarked without delay. At times, and especially when chased by the hell-hounds of fear, and when I imagined I saw degradation and ruin in the wind, there would come over me a vision of death, soft and gentle and persuasive as sleep, and bringing with it a composure and peace, if only for moments, which were infinitely restful and refreshing to me—a vision which seemed to enfold me in an atmosphere sweet as that which exhaled from a statue of Love which used to stand in my boyhood in an open glade at the entrance to a wood, and which with the fallen autumnal leaves that mingled at its feet seemed to breathe peace and rest on all who entered it;—and with Whitman I could have chanted an ode to Death.

In the meantime I was pushing on by day and by night my 'History of Intellectual Development,' which had now become

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irksome to the point of nausea; fully determined that if the first volume of it did not succeed, I would not go on with it. But the immediate success of the work, and the assistance and encouragement given me by the Treasury, seemed to lift the clouds that had so long encompassed me, and I was soon myself again. I started at once collecting materials for the second volume, but again the strain began to tell on me. This time, however, it was my sight; mists began to appear before my eyes; and I was advised that to arrest the progress of the disease and give myself a chance of recovery, entire rest from reading was necessary. It was then that to employ myself I set to work to finish this Autobiography.

Before closing this volume I had intended to attempt some forecast of the probable direction of Religious Thought in the future, now that a return to the older forms of Supernaturalism is impossible, and Science is unable of itself to satisfy the souls of men. But on second thoughts I have felt that it would be better to reserve this for the last volume of my 'History of Intellectual Development' where the whole course of evolution that leads up to it, and on which the judgment is based, will be before the reader.

THE END.

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